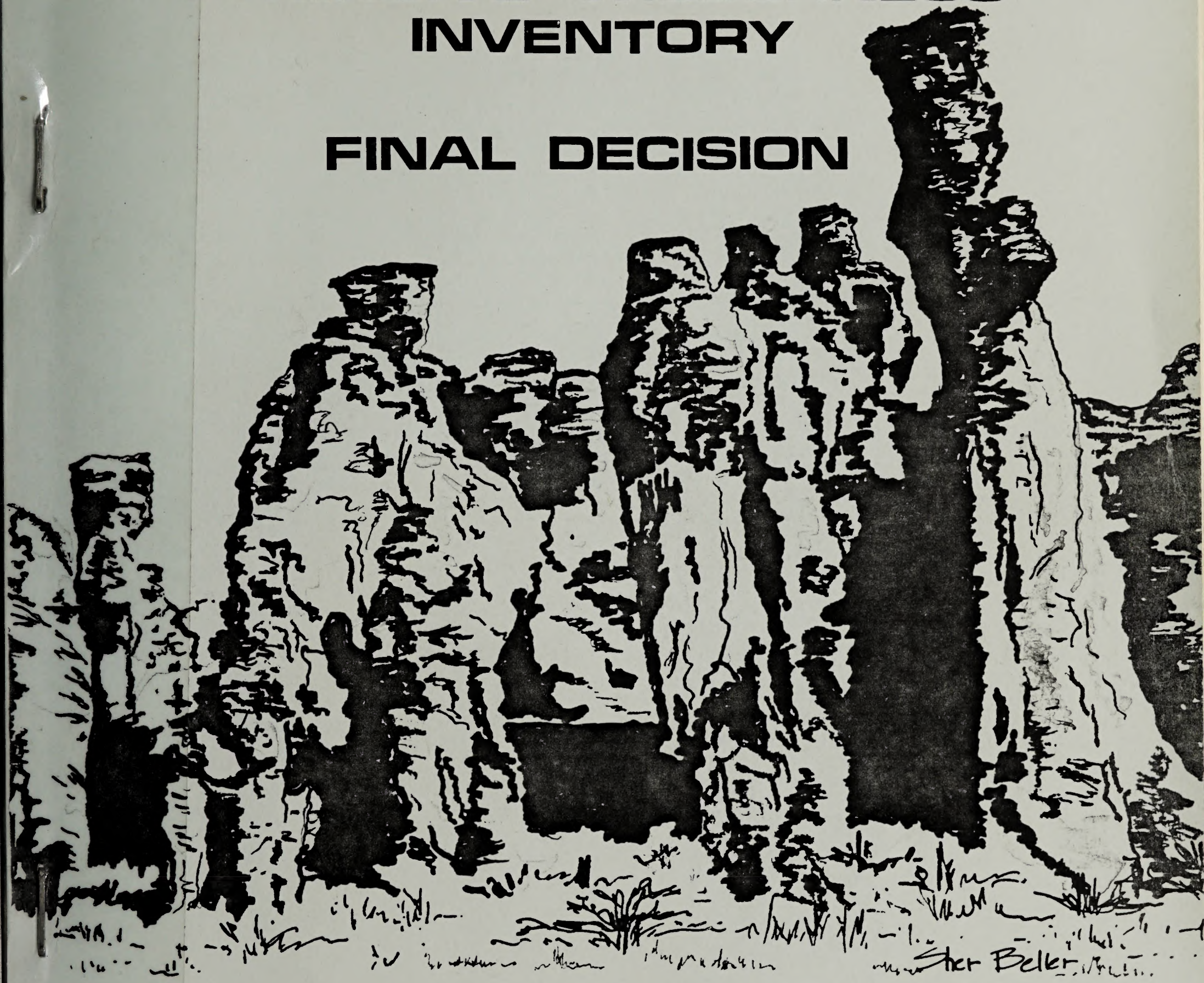
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IDAHO

INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY

FINAL DECISION



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
IDAHO STATE OFFICE
NOVEMBER 1980

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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Idaho State Office
Federal Building
550 W. Fort Street
Box 042
Boise, Idaho 83724

November 13, 1980

I am pleased to announce that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has completed the inventory phase of the wilderness review of the public lands in Idaho. The release of this report marks the completion of the intensive inventory.

During the intensive wilderness inventory, inventory units containing over 1,938,000 acres of roadless public lands in Idaho were examined in detail to determine the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics. As a result of the intensive inventory field work and evaluation of public comments, I have determined that 36 inventory units totaling 818,206 acres do contain wilderness characteristics, and that 74 inventory units and 1,120,049 acres do not.

I have been pleased with the public interest in the wilderness inventory. We received over 3,200 responses from individuals and a wide variety of organizations. The information provided on wilderness characteristics of these areas, especially the presence or absence of naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation, was of great help in formulating my final decision.

After analyzing and evaluating the comments received, I have formulated this final decision on which areas do or do not contain wilderness characteristics. Those which do are identified as Wilderness Study Areas to be studied through the BLM planning system with a recommendation reported to Congress as to whether or not they are suitable for designation as Wilderness Areas.

Also included in this report is my final decision on the protests to the accelerated wilderness inventory decision in the Owyhee Planning Area.

I extend my sincere appreciation to those individuals and organizations who have participated in this endeavor and request your continued help.

Sincerely yours,

Robert O. Buffington
State Director

Bureau of Land Management
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Denver, CO 80225

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Salmon District	
Shoshone District	
Coeur d'Alene District	

SUMMARY

IDAHO BLM WILDERNESS INVENTORY

THROUGH NOVEMBER 14, 1980

Total Acres Inventories	11,949,386
Acres Dropped During Initial Inventory Phase	8,289,215
Acres Considered Under Intensive Inventory Phase	3,660,171
Intensive Inventory Decision	
Previous Decisions	
Acres Dropped	695,775
Acres Identified as Wilderness Study Areas	773,999
Current Decisions	
Acres Dropped	1,120,049
Acres Identified as Wilderness Study Areas	818,206
Acres - Decision Deferred due to Appeals	252,414

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

Inventory Name	Wilderness Study Areas		Units Under Appeal	
	Units	Acres	Units	Acres
Sun Valley	2	14,158		
Black Butte	1	4,002		
Donkey Hills	1	3,290		
Ag ES	1	23,815		
Challis	4	117,073	4	117,073
Owyhee	10	236,101		1/
Overthrust	5	1,160		
Great Rift	1	374,400		
TOTAL	25	773,999		

1/ The Owyhee protest decision is announced as part of this report and is now subject to appeal.

WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

IDENTIFIED THROUGH ACCELERATED INVENTORIES

INVENTORY NUMBER	UNIT NAME	ACREAGE
Boise District		
16-40	North Fork Owyhee River	55,147
16-41	Horsehead Spring	6,211
16-42	Squaw Creek Canyon	11,379
16-44	Deep Creek - Nickel Creek	11,510
16-45	Middle Fork Owyhee River	13,336
16-47	West Fork Red Canyon	12,882
16-49a	Deep Creek - Owyhee River	72,083
16-49d	Yatahoney Creek	9,331
16-49e	Battle Creek	31,540
16-52	Upper Owyhee River	12,682
19-2	King Hill Creek 1/	23,815
Idaho Falls District		
33-1	Great Rift 1/ 2/	374,400
34-2	Table Rock Islands 3/	380
34-3	Pine Creek Islands 3/	155
34-4	Conant Valley Islands 3/	235
35-77	Henry's Lake 4/	350
37-77	Worm Creek 4/	40
Salmon District		
45-1	Goldburg 4/	3,290
46-11	Corral Horse Basin	51,500
46-13	Boulder Creek 4/	2,573
46-14	Jerry Peak	48,000
46-14a	Jerry Peak West	15,000
Shoshone District		
53-4	Little Wood River 4/	4,385
53-5	Friedman Creek	9,773
54-2	Black Butte	4,002

1/ A portion of this unit is in the Shoshone District.

2/ Instant Study Area.

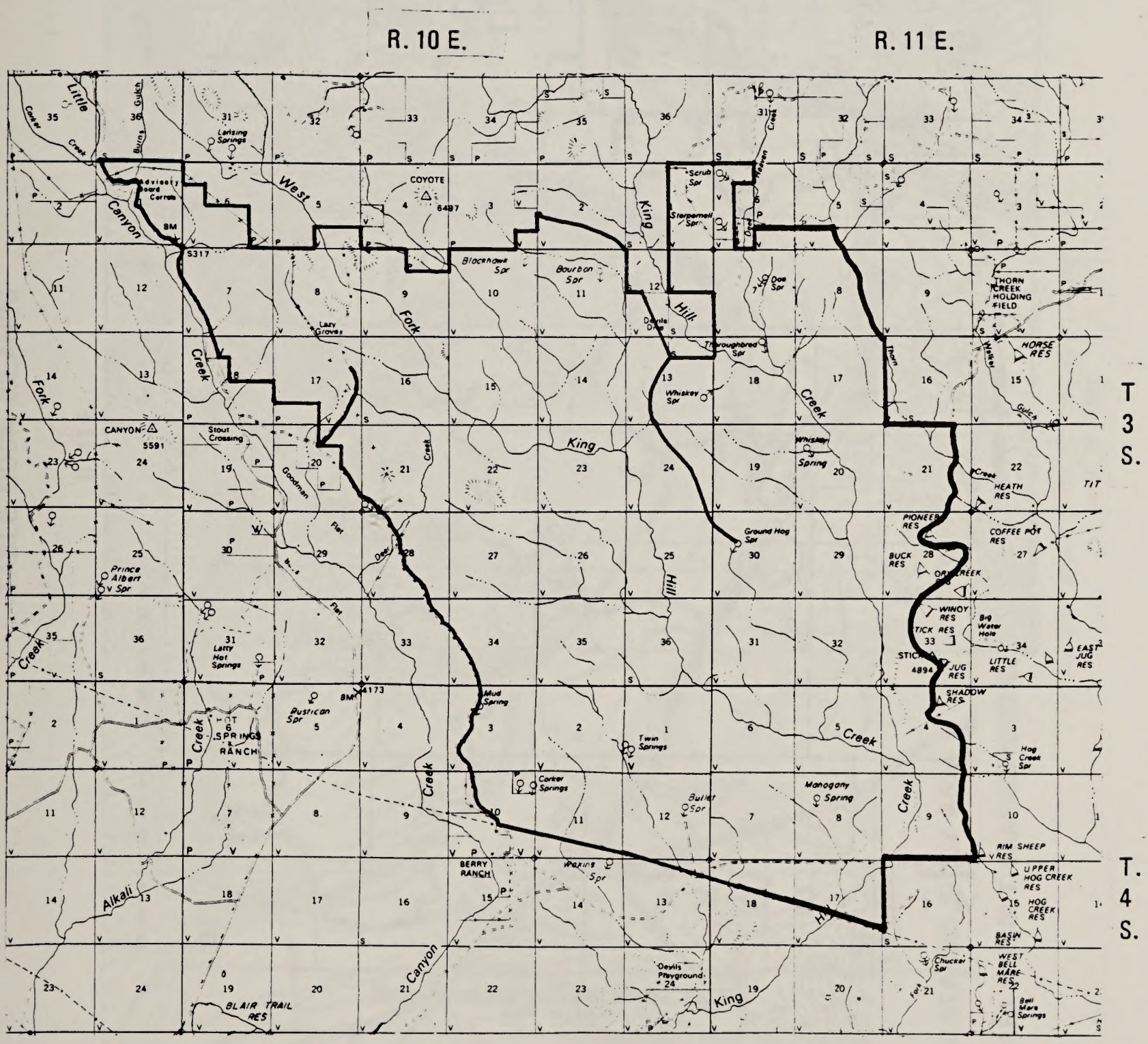
3/ These units were previously combined as one unit.

4/ Unit dependent upon a contiguous Rare II area to meet the criteria.

NOTE: WSA maps follow this page except for the Owyhee Area, where maps appear later in the report.

19--2

KING HILL CREEK



1 0 1 2 3 4 5

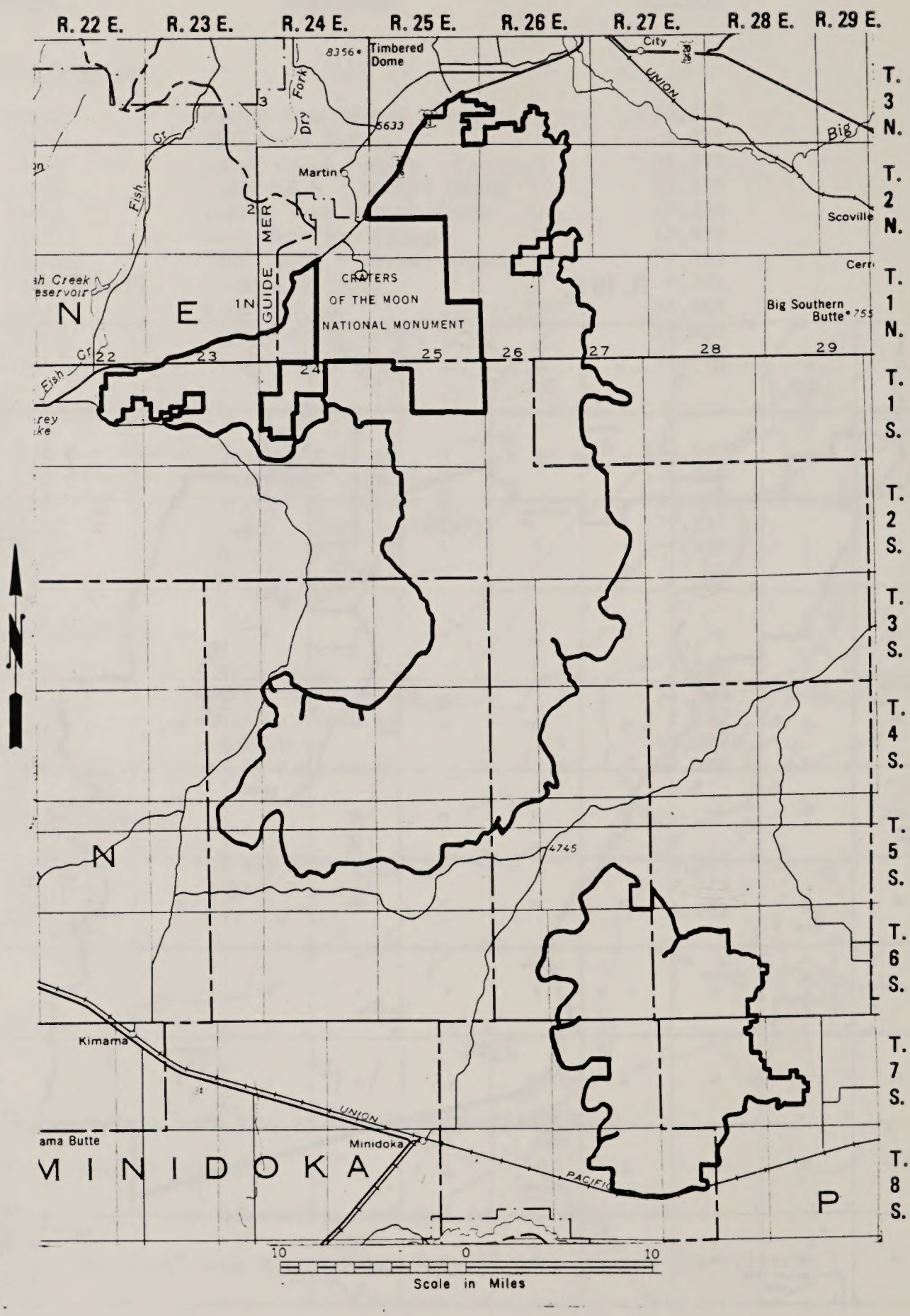
Scale in Miles

LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

33–1
GREAT RIFT



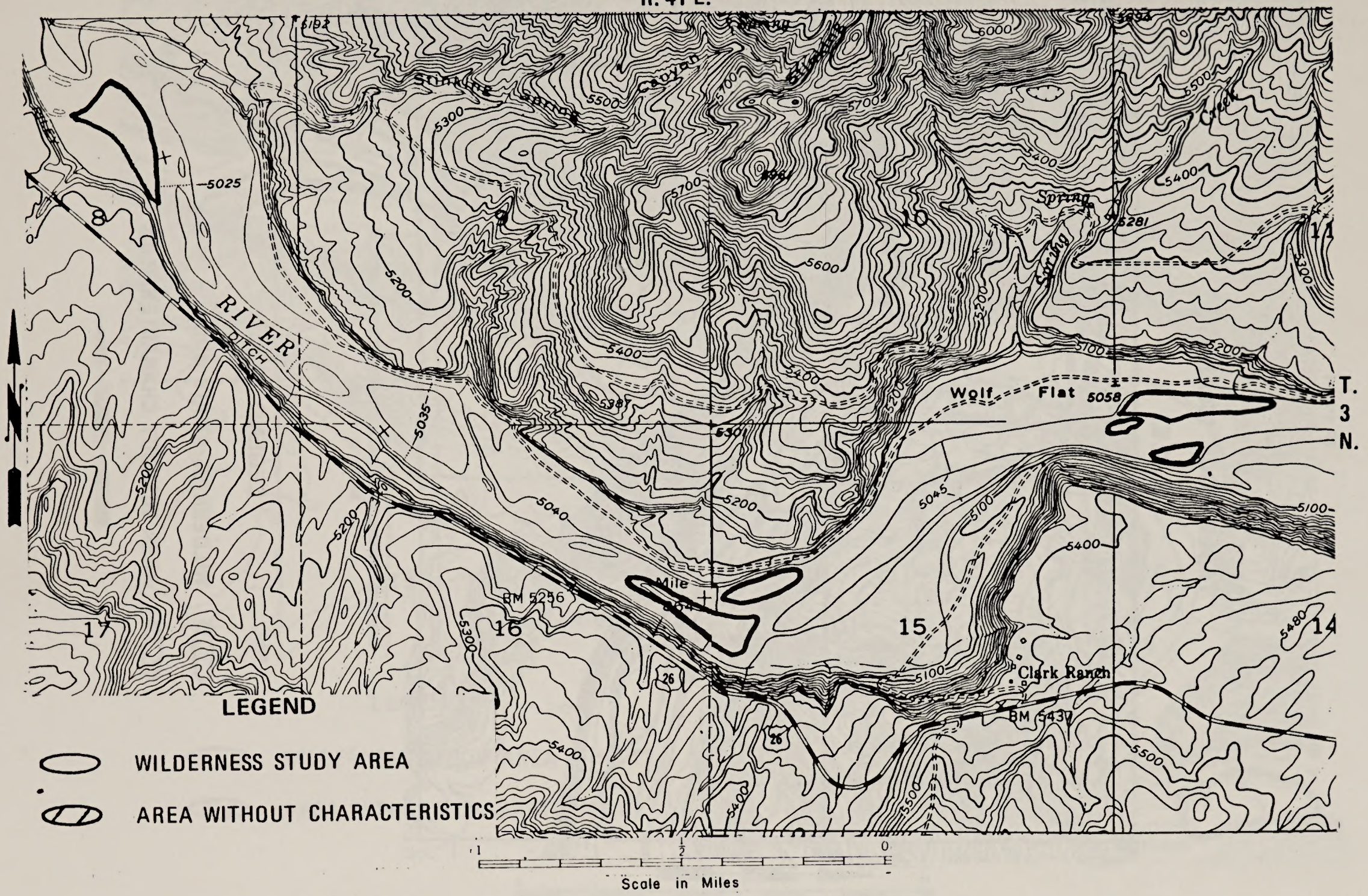
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WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

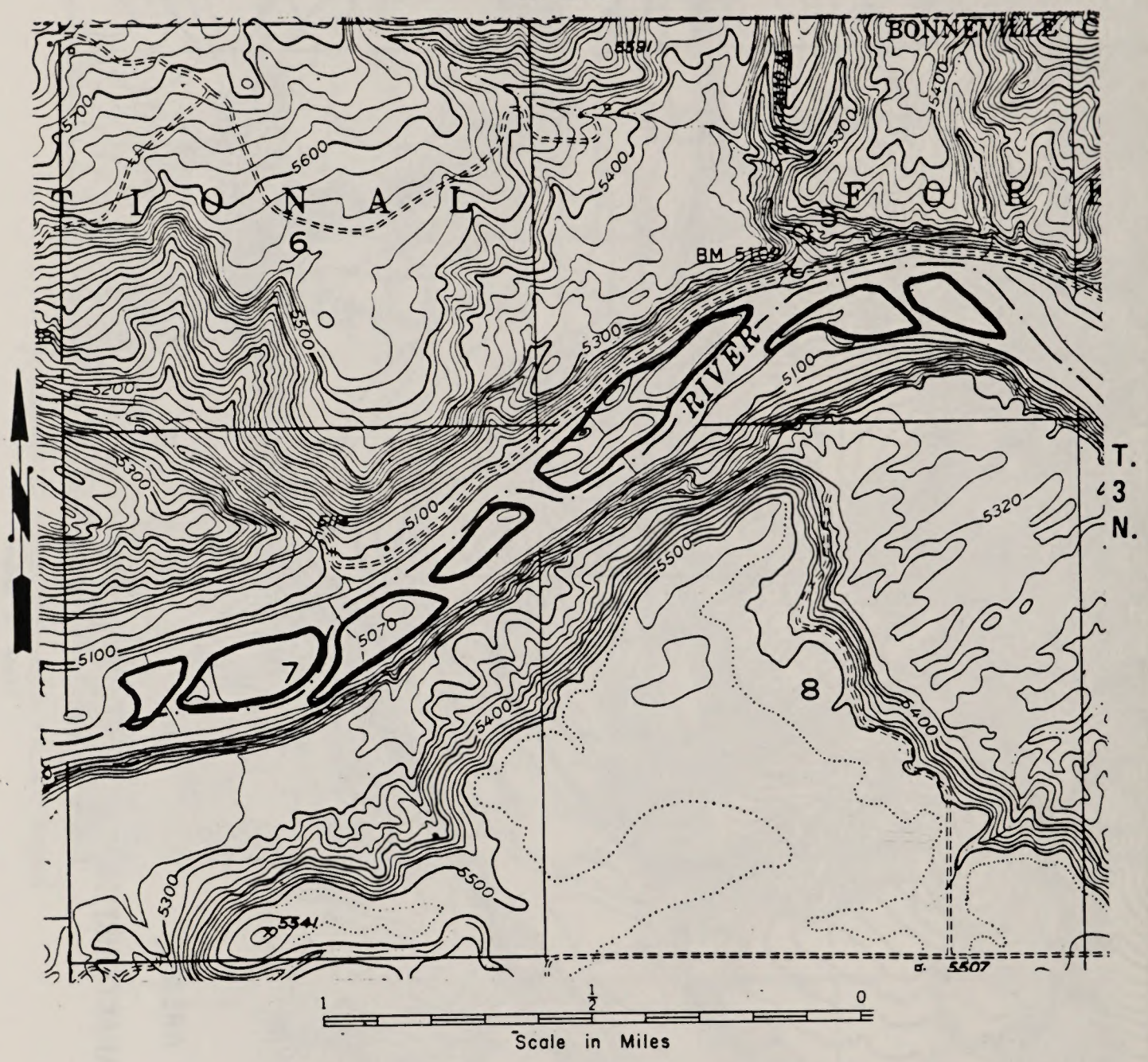
AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

34–2
TABLE ROCK ISLANDS

R. 41 E.



34–2
TABLE ROCK ISLANDS



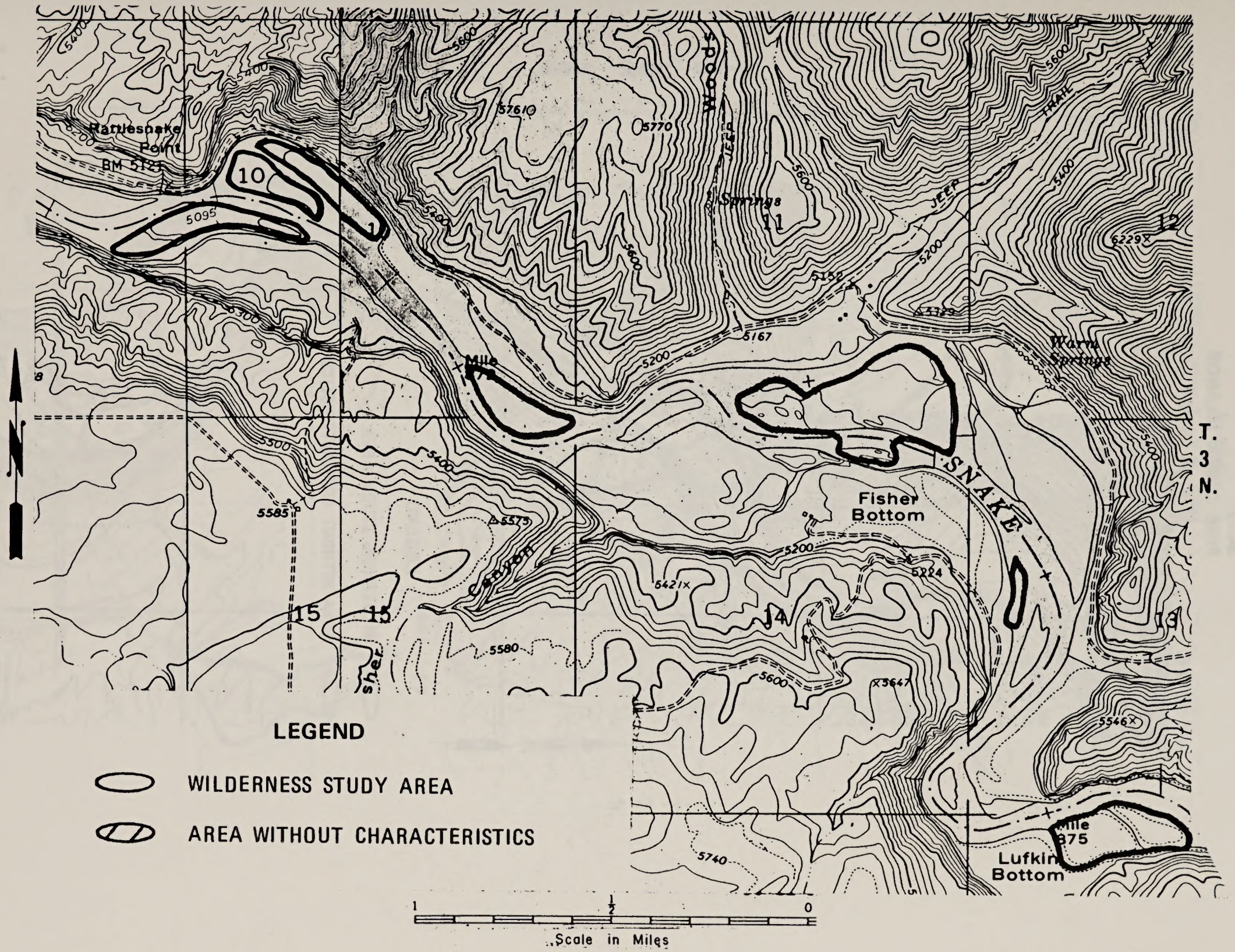
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WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

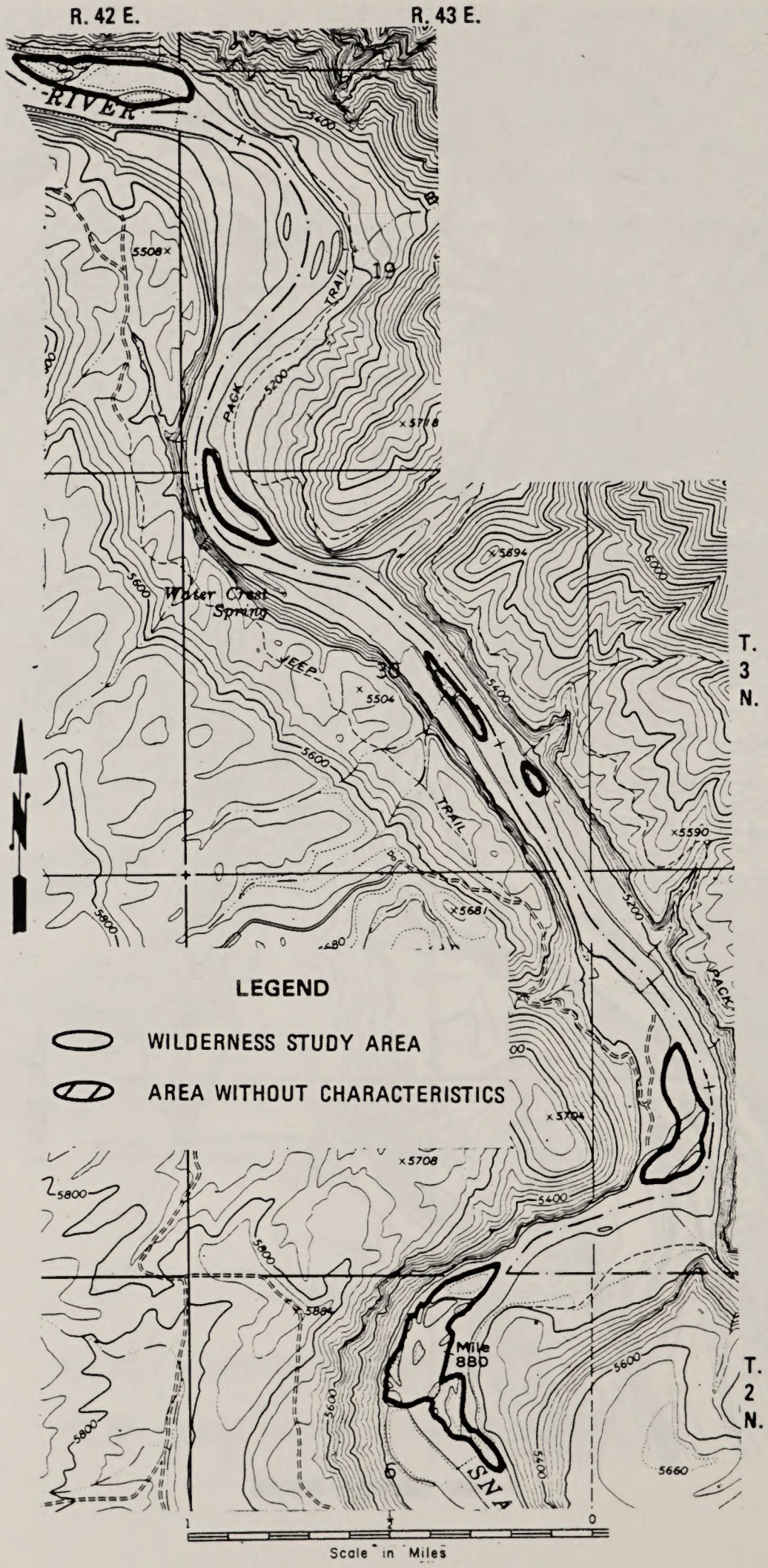
AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

34–2
TABLE ROCK ISLANDS

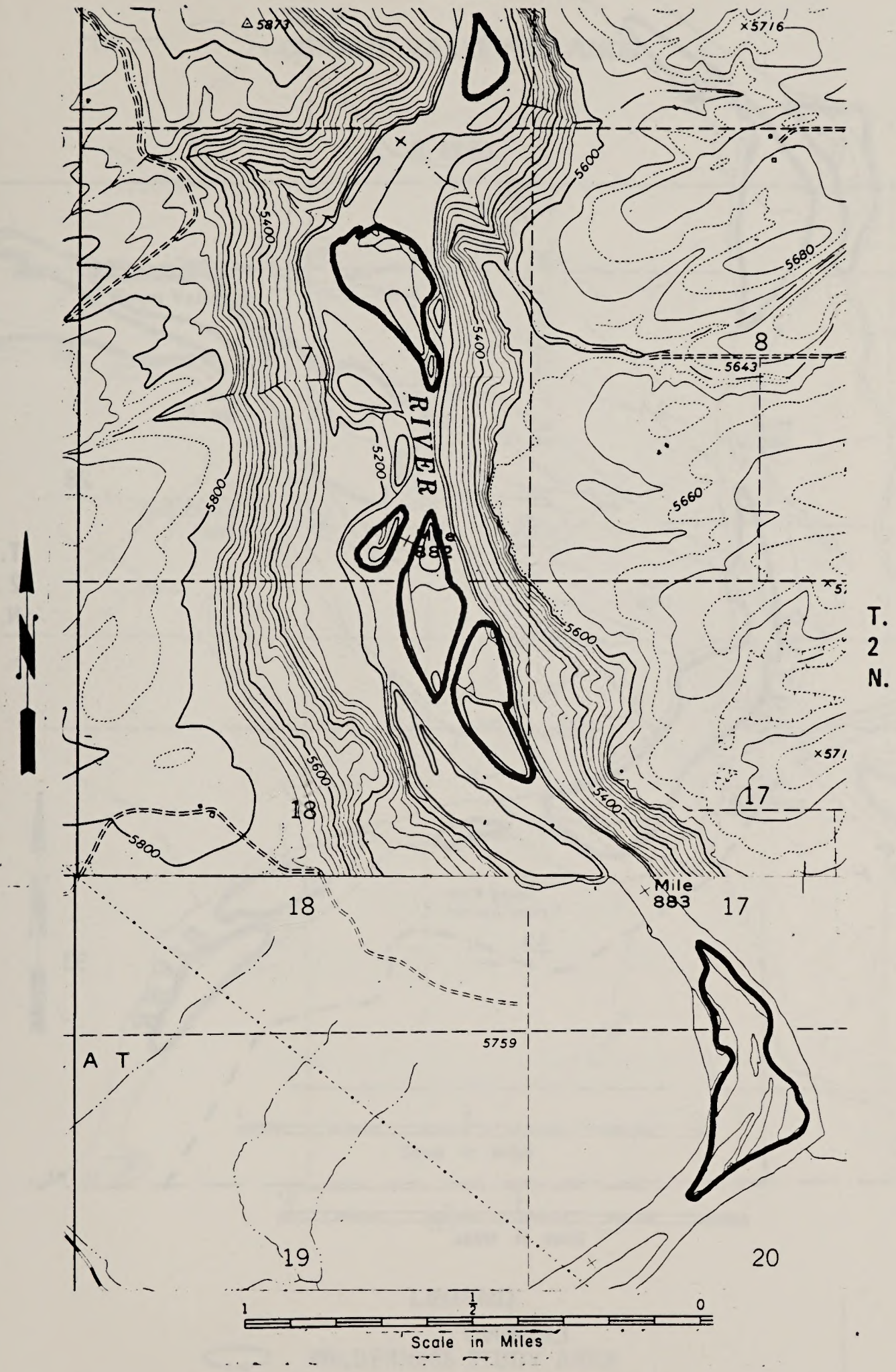
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34–3
PINE CREEK ISLANDS



34–3
PINE CREEK ISLANDS

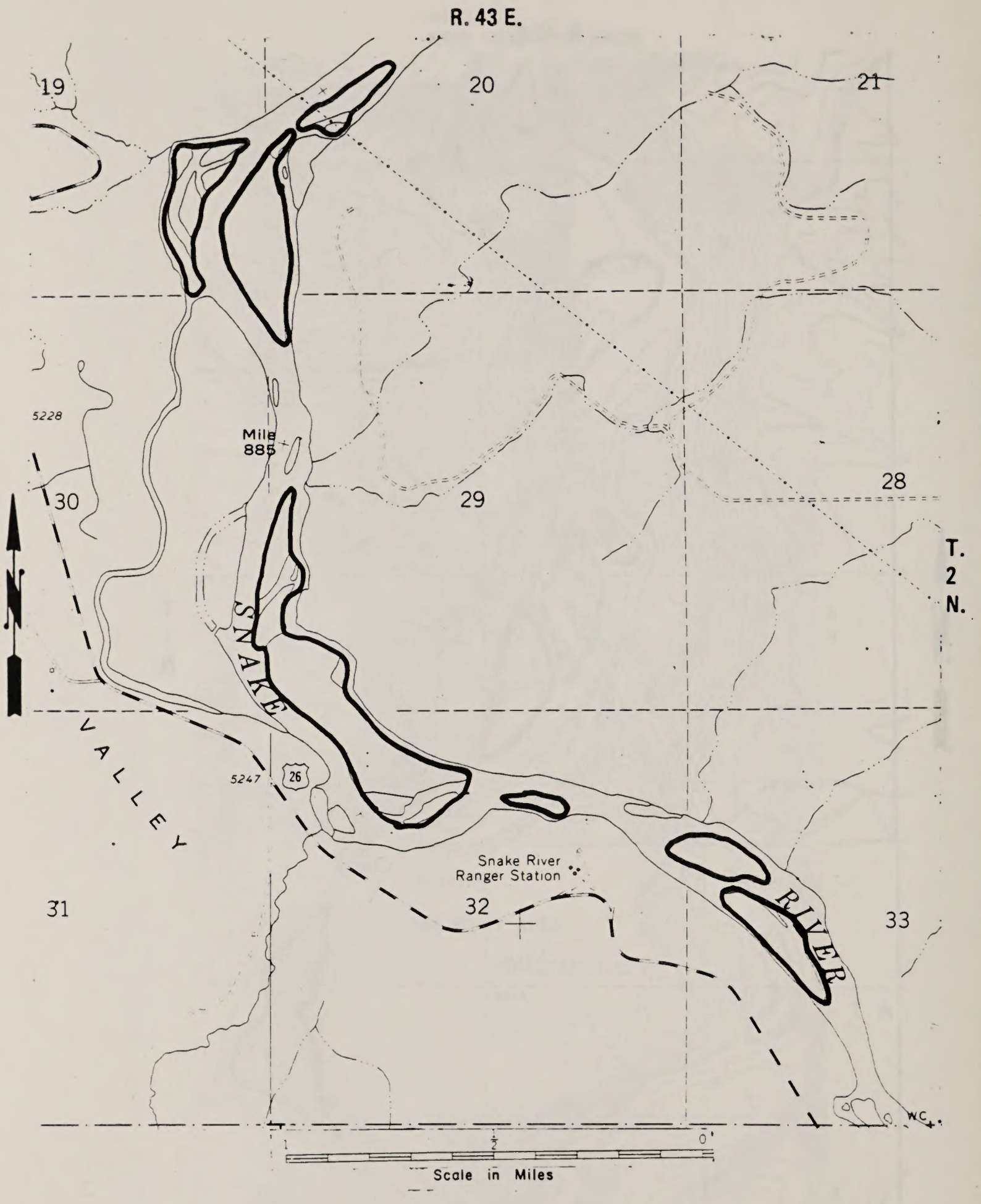


LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

34–4
CONANT VALLEY ISLANDS

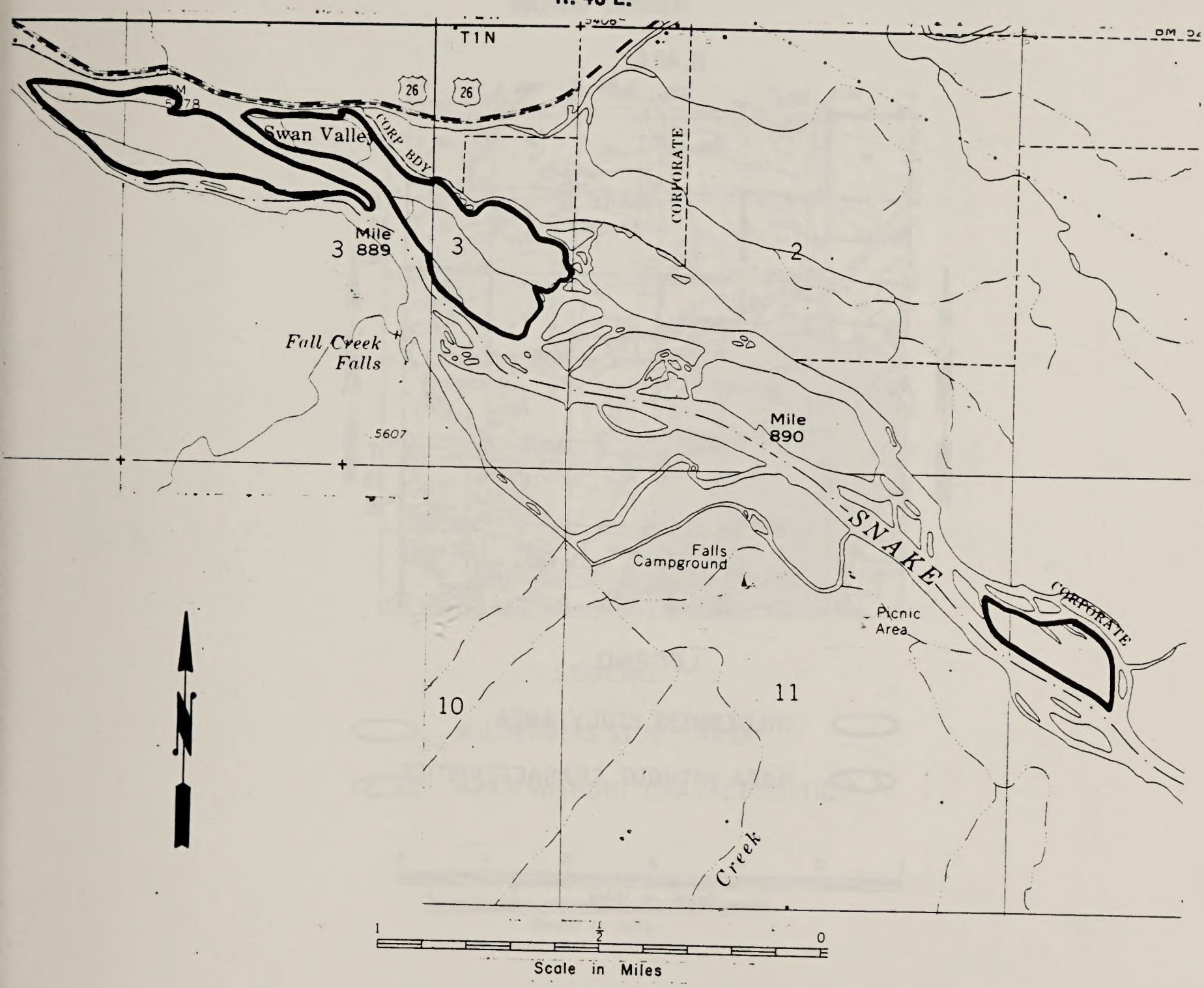


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WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

34–4
CONANT VALLEY ISLANDS

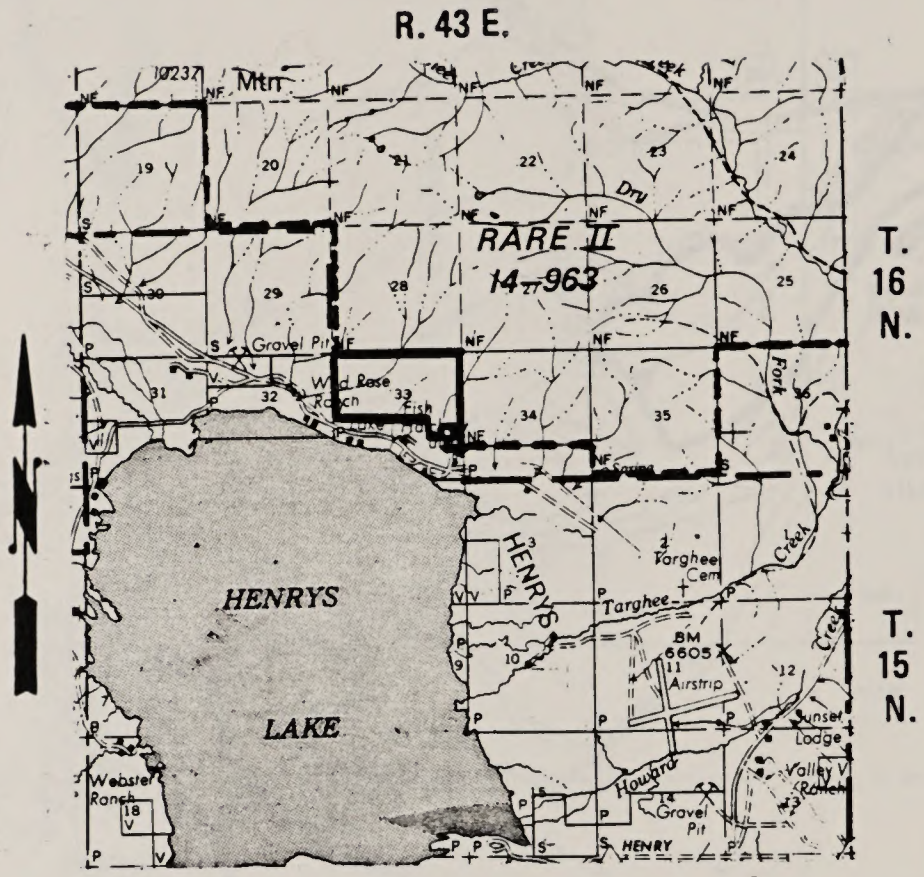


LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

35–77
HENRY'S LAKE



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

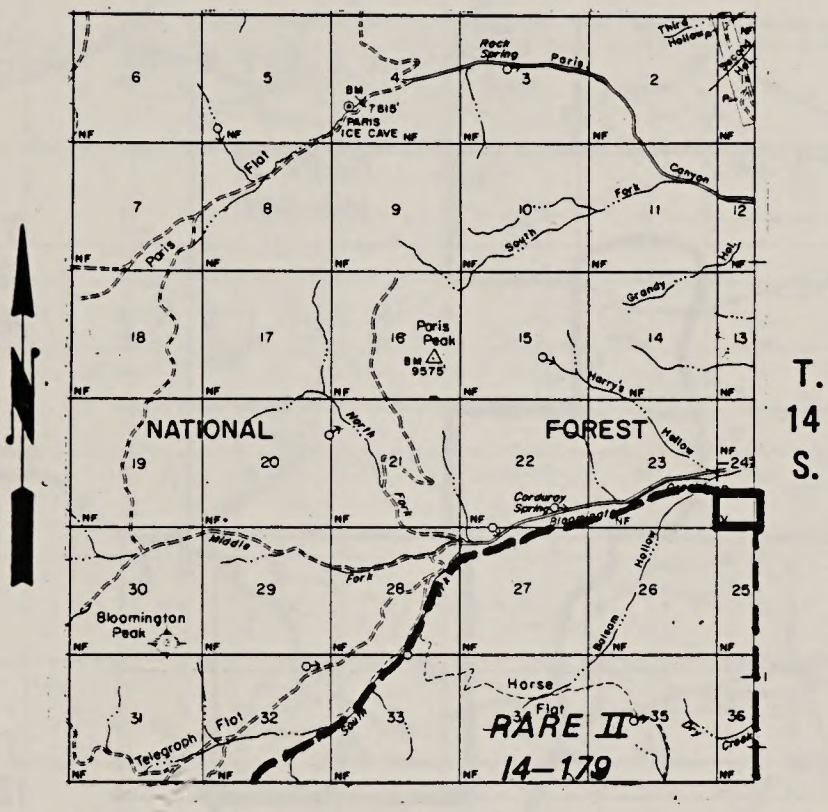
AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

37–77
WORM CREEK

R. 42 E.



T. 14 S.

LEGEND

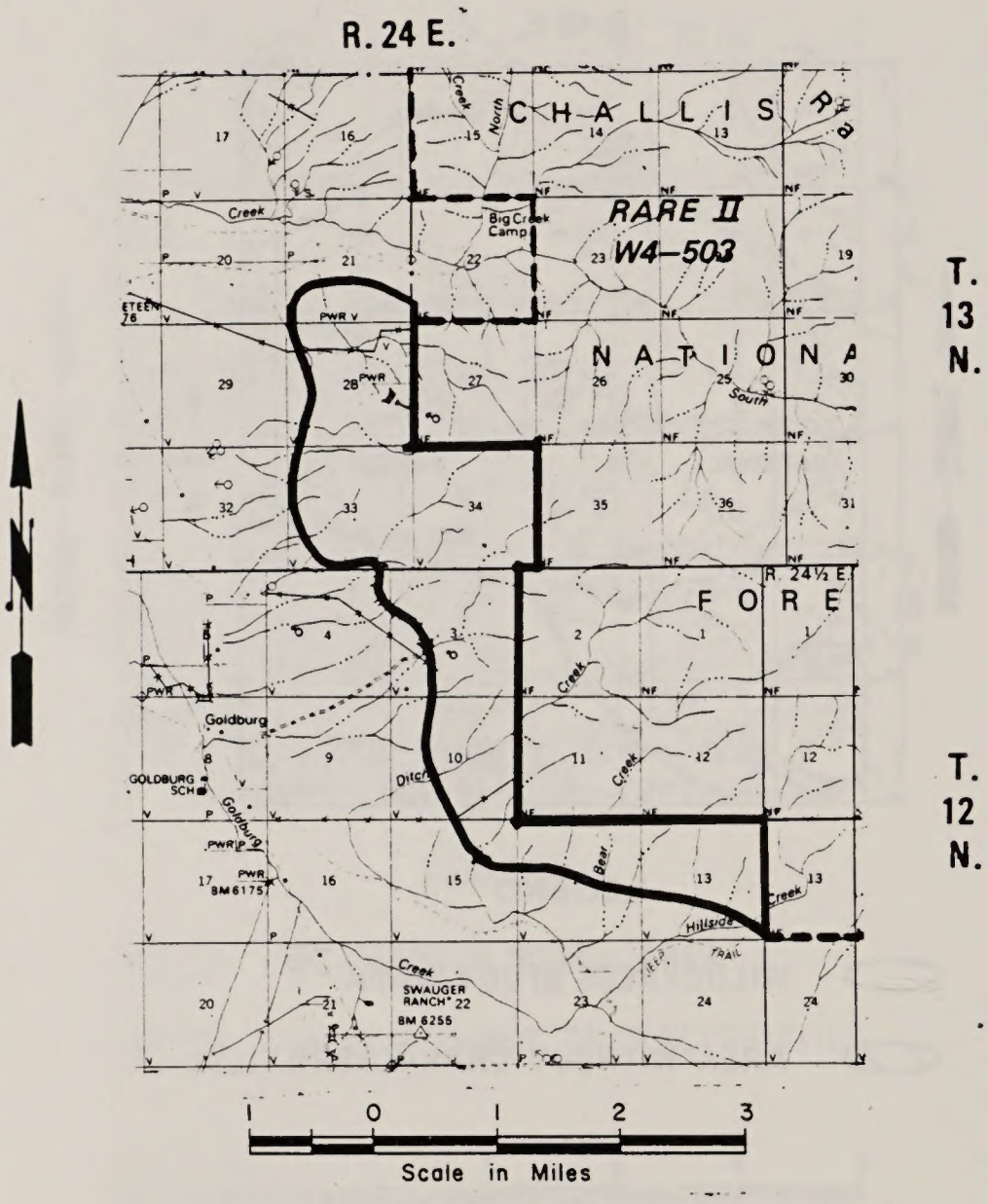
WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

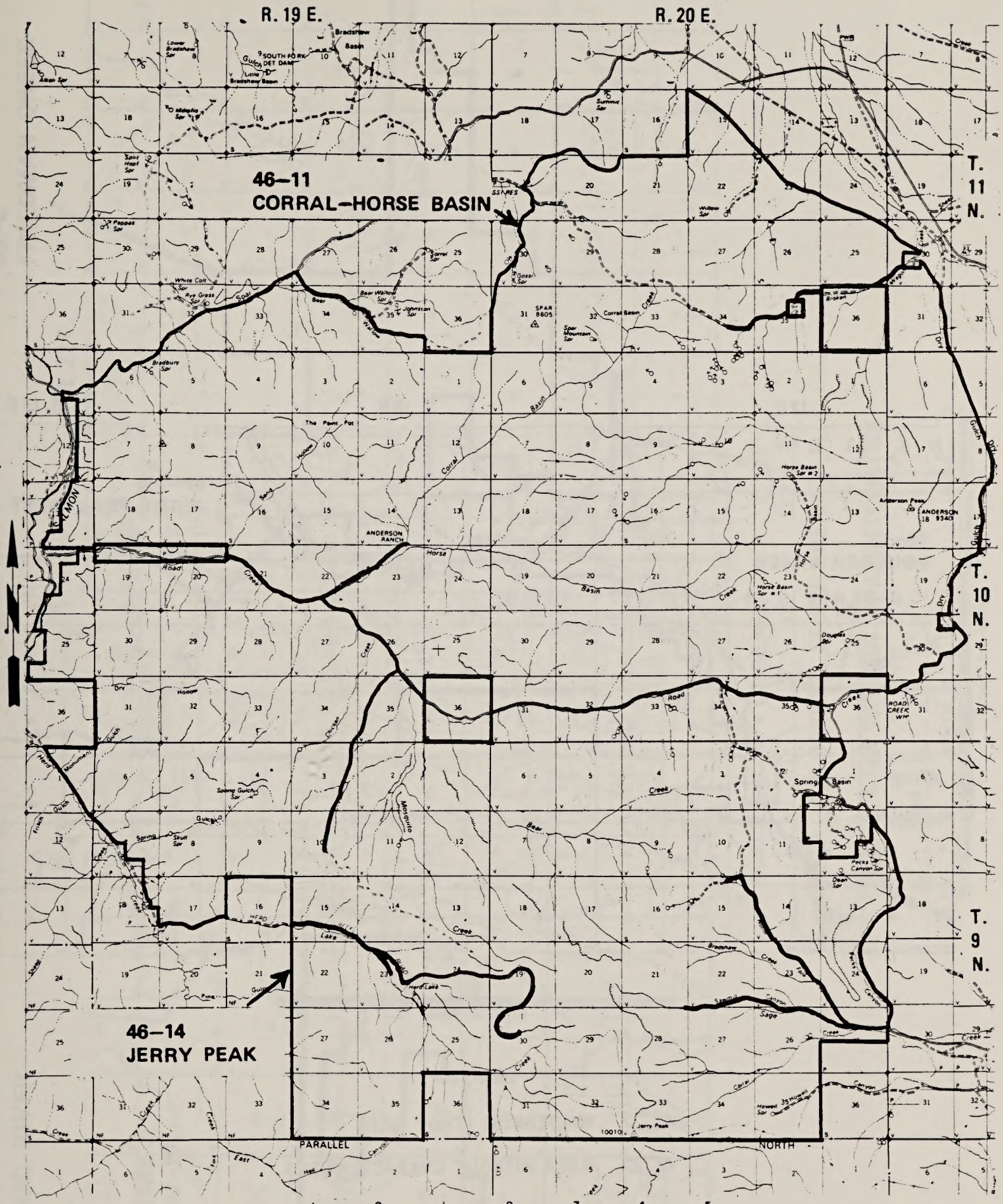
45–1
GOLDBURG



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

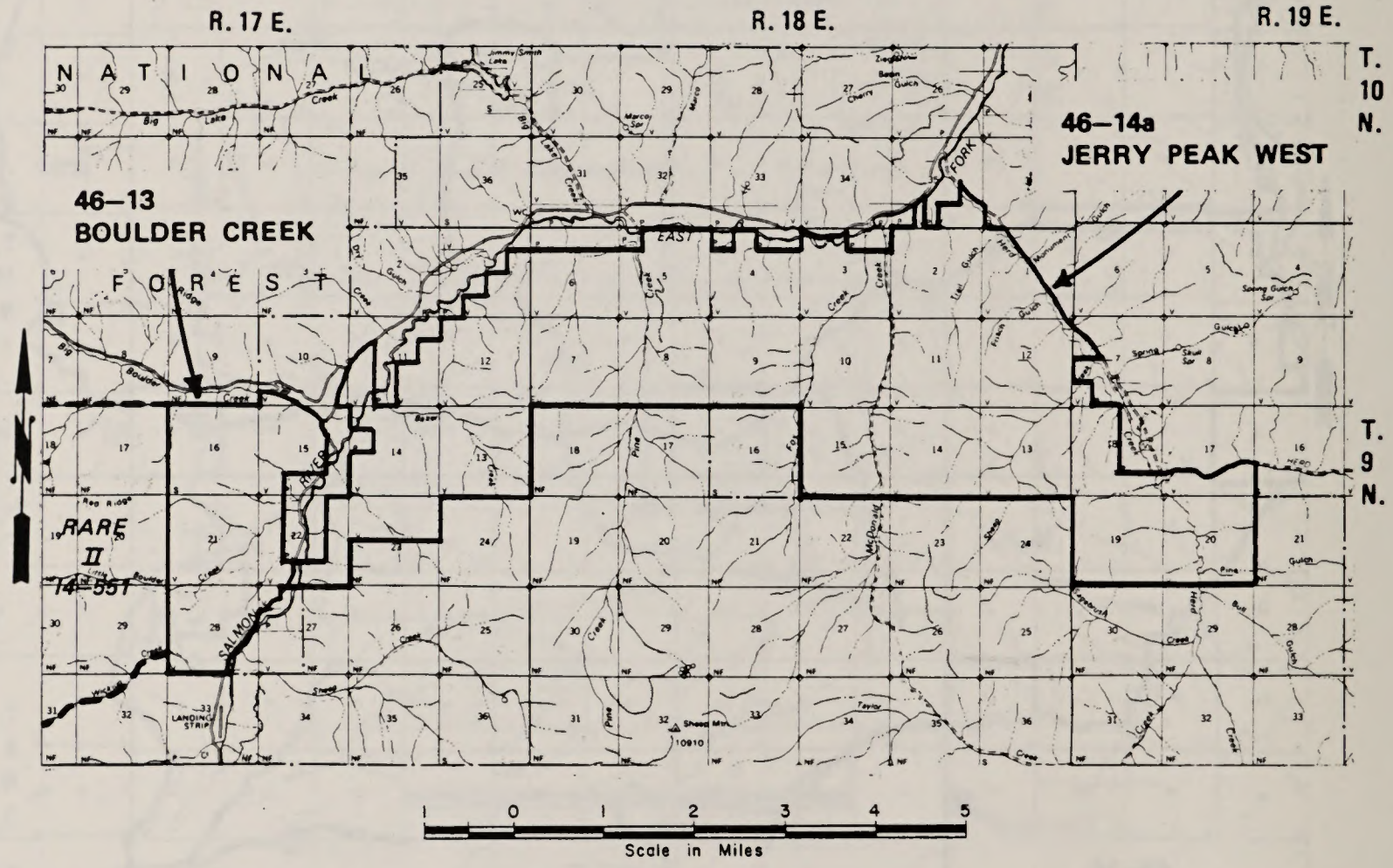
AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

53–4
LITTLE WOOD RIVER

53–5
FRIEDMAN CREEK

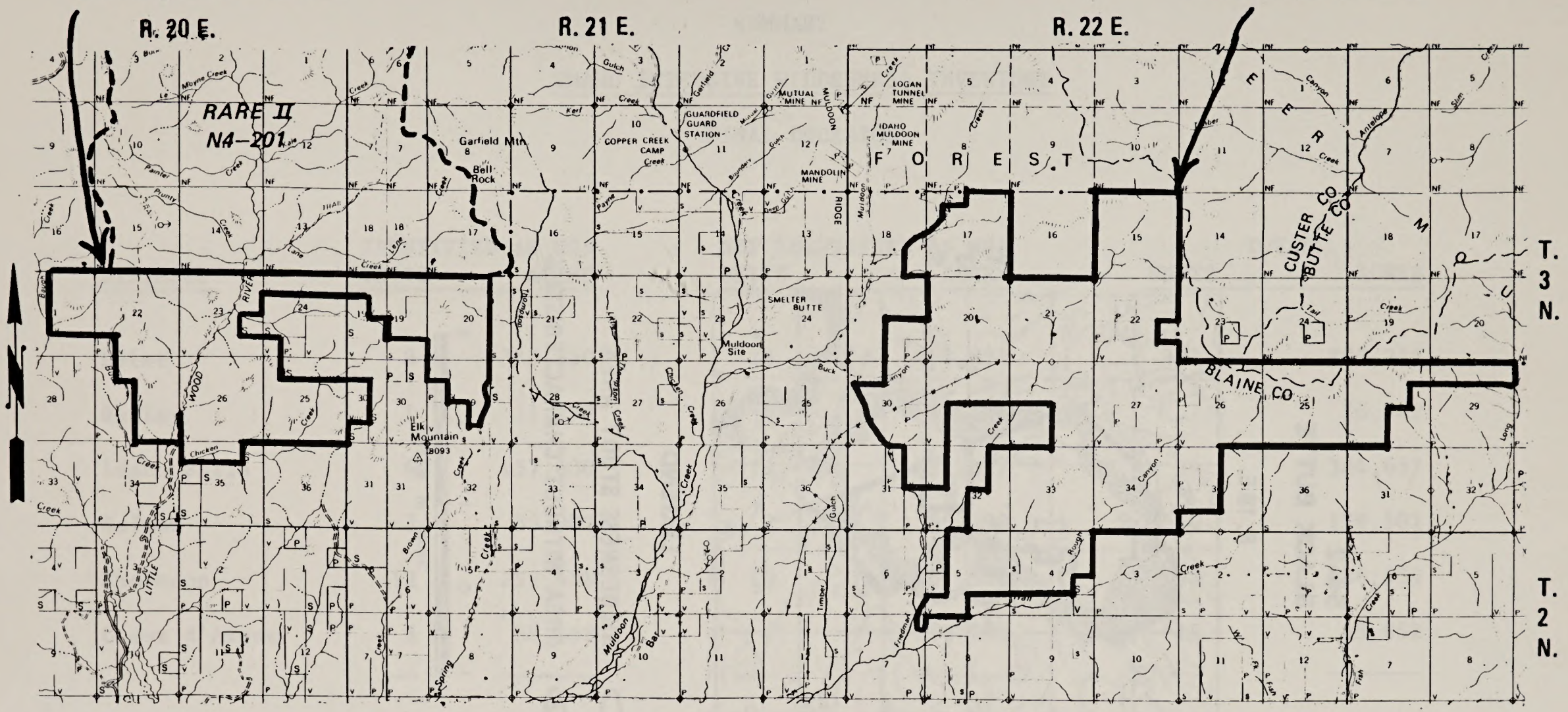
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R. 21 E.

R. 22 E.

T. 3 N.

T. 2 N.



LEGEND

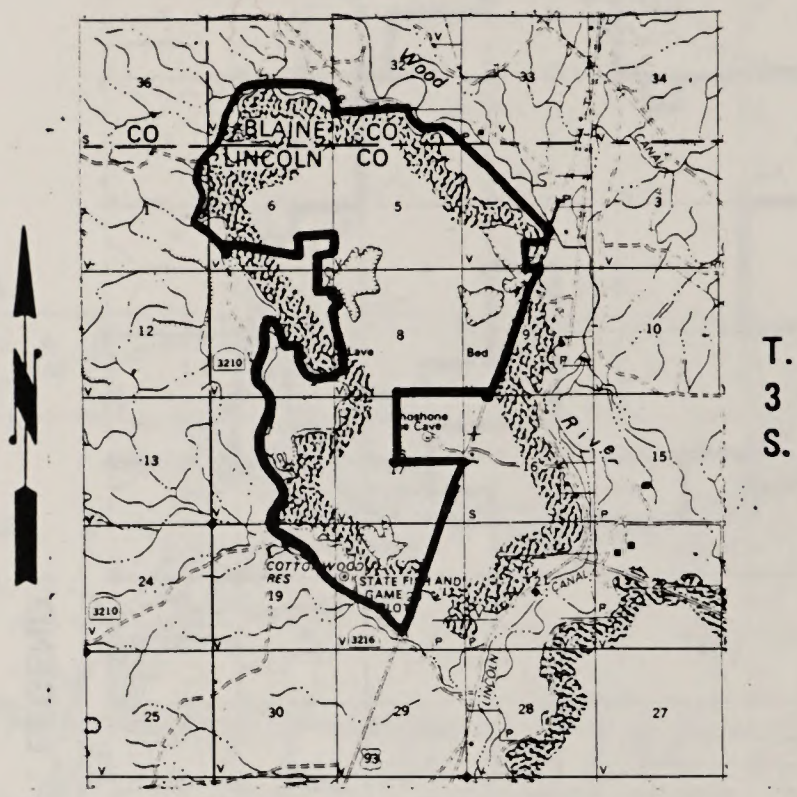
WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5
Scale in Miles

54–2
BLACK BUTTE

R. 18 E.



T. 3 S.

LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

SUMMARY

IDAHO INTENSIVE WILDERNESS INVENTORY

FINAL DECISION

DISTRICT	IDENTIFIED AS WSA UNITS	ACRES	NOT IDENTIFIED AS WSA UNITS	ACRES	TOTAL UNITS	ACRES
Boise	8	335,350	23	467,894	31	803,244
Burley	1	11,298	6	59,144	7	70,442
Idaho Falls	6	157,630	18	227,027	24	384,657
Salmon	3	53,002	7	86,499	10	139,501
Shoshone	12	222,458	16	264,501	28	486,959
Coeur d'Alene	6	38,468	4	14,984	10	53,452
TOTAL	36	818,206	74	1,120,049	110	1,938,255

INTENSIVE INVENTORY FINAL DECISIONS

		Acres Identified as WSA	Acres Not Identified as WSA	Page
Boise District				
11-17	Outcrop		6,420	1-2
14-19	Long Tom Creek		13,226	1-4
14-21	Bennett Creek		11,162	1-7
16-2	Jump Creek		8,301	1-9
16-9	Reynolds Creek Canyon		14,650	1-12
16-49c	Squaw Meadows		10,316	1-16
17-1a	Lookout Butte		20,077	1-18
17-1b	East Fork Bruneau River		10,178	1-21
17-6	Dry Lakes		26,208	1-24
17-7	Clover Crossing		6,314	1-27
17-10	Lower Salmon Falls Creek 1/	3,500	18,787	1-68
17-11	Jarbidge River	75,340	35,670	1-71
17-12	Poison Creek		13,532	1-30
18-1	Wildhorse		7,472	1-33
19-1	Cold Springs Creek		21,380	1-36
110-91a	Box Creek	428		1-76
111-5	Poison Gulch		30,742	1-38
111-6	Little Jack's Creek	58,040	16,879	1-78
111-7a	Big Hill		12,924	1-41
111-7b	Duncan Creek		10,005	1-43
111-7c	Big Jack's Creek	54,833	10,301	1-84
111-12	Sheep Trail		19,702	1-46
111-17	Bruneau River	107,020	27,042	1-88
111-18	Pole Creek	24,509	7,247	1-93
111-19a	Camas Creek		19,347	1-49
111-19b	Bull Gulch		33,150	1-52
111-20a	Big Springs		5,342	1-55
111-20b	Upper Battle Creek		17,787	1-58
111-21	Bull Basin		17,625	1-61
111-36a	Sheep Creek West	11,680	3,696	1-96
111-36b	Sheep Creek East		12,412	1-64
	Boise District Total	335,350	467,894	
Burley District				
23-1a	Jim Sage		6,901	2-2
23-1c	Jim Sage		7,010	2-5
26-1	Hanzel Mountain		20,615	2-8
26-3	South Samaria		6,615	2-11
27-1	South Deep Creek		9,609	2-14
27-2	Deep Creek Peak		6,646	2-17
28-1	Petticoat Peak	11,298	1,748	2-21
	Burley District Total	11,298	59,144	
Idaho Falls District				
31-10	Illinois		11,150	3-2
31-11	Deadman Canyon		23,000	3-4
31-13	Timbered Dome		10,240	3-6
31-14	Appendicitis Hill	24,870	630	3-50
31-15	Dry Hollow		17,800	3-8
31-17	White Knob Mountains	9,950		3-53
32-2	Sands Canyon		8,010	3-11
32-3	Hawley Mountain	15,510	640	3-56

		Acres Identified as WSA	Acres Not Identified as WSA	Page
Idaho Falls District (cont'd)				
32-4	Taylor Mountain		11,134	3-14
32-9	Black Canyon	5,400		3-59
32-16	Pass Creek		1,220	3-17
33-4	Cedar Butte	35,700	3,120	3-62
33-5	Skull		8,650	3-19
33-6	Rye Grass		8,000	3-22
33-7	Cottontail		9,300	3-25
33-12	Split Top		18,080	3-28
33-13	Bear Point		20,650	3-31
33-14	Mosby Butte		35,720	3-34
33-15	Hell's Half Acre	66,200	2,720	3-65
33-16	Morgan		9,420	3-37
33-22	Cox's Place		12,790	3-40
33-23	Bear Trap		13,860	3-42
33-24	Firth Quad Islands		86	3-45
33-25	Moreland Quad Islands		807	3-47
	Idaho Falls District Total	157,630	227,027	
Salmon District				
41-3	Geertson Creek		10,720	4-2
42-6	Baldy Basin		10,720	4-4
43-3	Eighteen Mile	24,922		4-17
44-2	King Mountain		12,602	4-6
44-3	Hat Creek		9,707	4-8
44-4	Ellis Creek		28,040	4-10
44-9	Cronks Canyon		7,470	4-12
45-5	Mill Creek		1,330	4-14
45-12	Burnt Creek 2/	24,980	5,130	4-20
47-4	Borah Peak	3,100	780	4-23
	Salmon District Total	53,002	86,499	
Shoshone District				
54-3	Preacher Creek		8,827	5-2
54-4	Rattlesnake Canyon		11,355	5-5
54-5	Little City of Rocks	5,875	95	5-46
54-6	Black Canyon	10,371	10,589	5-49
54-7	Four Mile Bench		7,542	5-8
54-8a	Gooding City of Rocks	14,743)	2,440	5-52
54-8b	Gooding City of Rocks	6,287)		5-52
54-9	Clover Creek		8,455	5-10
54-10	Deer Creek	7,487	1,394	5-55
54-11	Indian		16,968	5-12
54-12	Dempsey Creek		23,644	5-14
54-13	Forgotten Hills		9,420	5-16
56-2	Lava	23,680	1,913	5-58
57-2	Shale Butte	15,968	5,930	5-61
57-3	Antelope		12,271	5-18
57-4	Black Ridge Crater		8,138	5-21
57-5	Lone Rock		10,934	5-24
57-6	Wildhorse		21,544	5-27
57-7	Pagari		33,116	5-30
57-8	Sand Butte	20,792	15,953	5-64
57-10	Raven's Eye	67,110	190	5-67
57-11	Little Deer	33,531	9,443	5-70
57-12	Laidlaw Butte		9,868	5-33
57-13	Potter Butte		16,180	5-36
57-14	Bear Den Butte	9,700	4	5-73
57-15	Point		7,398	5-39
57-16	MacRae Lake		7,876	5-42
59-7	Shoshone	6,914	3,014	5-75
	Shoshone District Total	222,458	264,501	

		Acres Identified as WSA	Acres Not Identified as WSA	Page
Coeur d'Alene District				
61-1	Selkirk Crest	720	440	6-14
61-6c	Hideaway Island		170	6-2
61-9	Rochat Creek		6,960	6-5
61-10	Crystal Lake	9,027		6-17
61-15a	Grandmother Mountain	10,339		6-20
61-15b	Grandmother Mountain	6,790		6-20
62-1	Snowhole Rapids	5,068	238	6-23
62-2	Confluence		5,110	6-7
62-4	Big Canyon		1,100	6-10
62-10	Marshall Mountain	6,524	966	6-26
	Coeur d'Alene District Total	38,468	14,984	
	STATE TOTAL	818,206	1,120,049	

1/ Portion of unit is in the Burley District.

2/ Portion of unit is in the Idaho Falls District.

INTRODUCTION

Contained within this report are the Bureau of Land Management's final decisions on those BLM-administered lands in Idaho which qualify as Wilderness Study Areas (WSA's) and those which do not. Note that BLM is not at this time recommending that these areas should or should not be designated wilderness by Congress. BLM has determined that some inventory units contain wilderness characteristics as defined by the Wilderness Act of 1964 and that some do not. The areas that meet these characteristics are identified as WSA's and will be studied to determine whether or not they are suitable for wilderness. These studies will take place at a later date. Every WSA will be reviewed and acted upon by Congress after the studies are complete, whether the BLM deems them suitable for designation as wilderness or not.

These decisions are the result of intensive inventory field work conducted during the summer and fall, 1979. Procedures for evaluating wilderness criteria are noted in the BLM Wilderness Inventory Handbook, September 1978, and in Organic Act Directive 78-61, including changes 1, 2, and 3, and Instruction Memo No. 80-236.

The narratives included here are summaries of more detailed intensive inventory reports available in the BLM Idaho district offices. These summaries present a brief, overall picture of Idaho's intensive inventory decisions. For more detailed, site specific information, refer to the district files. More detailed maps and photographs are also contained in these files.

This report was prepared following a 90-day period for public comment on the intensive inventory, which ran from April 4, 1980, to July 3, 1980. Comments received by the offices of the BLM after July 3, 1980, were also utilized in the State Director's final decision, as the decision announcement date was extended from September to November 14, 1980.

I. BACKGROUND

A. Overview of BLM's Wilderness Review Process

The BLM's wilderness review process will be completed in three phases: Inventory, Study, and Reporting.

Phase I - Inventory: The inventory phase has two parts, initial and intensive. Its overall purpose is to identify those public lands having wilderness characteristics as defined by the Wilderness Act of 1964.

Initial Inventory - In this stage, public lands administered by the BLM which clearly and obviously did not have wilderness characteristics were identified. Existing information, such as maps and aerial photos, along with input received from the public, were utilized to make this decision. Three criteria had to be met for an area to be recommended for intensive inventory. Each area must be: (1) at least 5,000 acres in size or contiguous to a proposed or existing wilderness area, (2) roadless, and (3) substantially free of man's imprints.

The proposed initial inventory decision was released by the Idaho State Director March 15, 1979. A 90-day public comment period followed, ending June 15, 1979. The final decision was released August 10, 1979.

Intensive Inventory - In this stage, as reflected in this report, field surveys were conducted. Each area was examined to determine the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics listed in the Wilderness Act: size, naturalness, the presence of outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation, and the presence of supplemental values. For an area to qualify as a Wilderness Study Area, it must meet the size criteria, must be substantially natural and have either outstanding opportunities for solitude or outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. Inventory units totalling 1,938,255 acres of BLM land that were intensively inventoried, are discussed in this report.

Field work for the intensive inventory was conducted during the summer and fall, 1979. The public comment period for this decision ran from April 4, 1980, and ended July 3, 1980. The final decision on which areas are Wilderness Study Areas, originally scheduled for release in September, is contained in this report. A 30-day protest period is now initiated.

Protest and Appeal Procedures

The final intensive inventory decision for each inventory unit is considered individually and separately from the decision for every other inventory unit. These decisions will become effective on December 15, 1980, unless timely protests are received by the Idaho State Director of the BLM.

Persons wishing to protest any of the decisions announced herein must file a written protest with BLM Idaho State Director, Box 042, Federal Building, 550 W. Fort Street, Boise, Idaho 83724, on or before 4:15 PM, December 15, 1980. Only those protests received by the Idaho State Director by the time and date specified will be accepted.

The protest must specify the inventory unit(s) to which it is directed. It must include a clear and concise statement of the reasons for the protest, as well as data to support the reasons stated.

At the conclusion of the protest period, the State Director will publish in the Federal Register a notice of those decisions that were not protested and therefore have become final, and those decisions which are under formal protest. The notice will identify those inventory units under protest and will announce that the decision on the units will not become final pending a decision on the protest and any resulting appeal.

The State Director will issue a written decision on any protest which is filed according to the above requirements and will publish a notice in the Federal Register of the action taken in response to the protest.

Any person adversely affected by the State Director's decision on a written protest, may appeal such decision under the provisions of 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 4.

Phase II - Study: The study phase of the wilderness review will be completed as a part of the regional comprehensive land-use plans. During each planning effort, the public will have several opportunities to comment on all of the resource values within a Wilderness Study Area. These comments will be considered in making land use decisions prior to recommendations to the President and Congress on an area's suitability or nonsuitability as wilderness. This phase will begin soon after the announcement of this Wilderness Study Area decision.

Phase III - Reporting: Recommendations on an area's suitability or nonsuitability for wilderness designation will be reported to Congress through the Secretary of the Interior and the President. Reports on all WSA's must be submitted to the President by September 21, 1991.

B. Instant Study Areas (ISA's)

Congress directed that all natural areas identified prior to November 1, 1975, would automatically become Instant Wilderness Study Areas. Congress directed that these areas be inventoried and evaluated on an accelerated schedule to determine their suitability for wilderness designation (Section 603, FLPMA).

Three of these areas are located in Idaho:

Natural Area	District
Birds of Prey	Boise
China Cup Butte	Idaho Falls
Grassland Kipuka (Great Rift)	Idaho Falls, Shoshone

Inventories and reports have been completed for the China Cup Butte and Birds of Prey areas with the recommendation that these areas do not have wilderness characteristics. Public reviews were held in 1979, and the reports which will be submitted to Congress can be examined at the appropriate district office or in the State Office in Boise.

The Great Rift ISA was determined to have wilderness characteristics in the intensive inventory which was conducted in 1979. A suitability report and an environmental statement on the Great Rift are now undergoing administrative review in Washington.

Idaho Instant Study Areas

	Identified as Lacking Wilderness Characteristics		Identified as Containing Wilderness Characteristics	
Area Name	Units	Acres	Units	Acres
Great Rift			1	374,400
Birds of Prey	12	161,736		
China Cup Butte	2	16,110		

C. Definitions

Terminology specific to the BLM Wilderness Review has evolved throughout the inventory process. To facilitate better communication, the following terms elaborate on definitions already given in the Wilderness Inventory Handbook and other guidance.

Cherrystemming: An unofficial term used to describe the way an inventory unit boundary is drawn to exclude a road that appears to enter the unit; the resulting boundary resembles a cherrystem.

Contiguous Lands: Lands or legal subdivisions having a common boundary. Lands having only a common corner are not contiguous.

FLPMA: Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, which mandated the BLM Wilderness Review. Often referred to and pronounced "FLIPMA."

Instant Study Areas: Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act mandated that all primitive or natural areas formally identified prior to November 1, 1975, be studied for wilderness suitability and recommended to the President by July 1, 1980. These existing primitive and natural areas are called Instant Study Areas, or ISA's.

Inventory Unit: An area of public land indexed for easy reference at the start of the wilderness inventory. All BLM lands in Idaho are within an inventory unit; these units may or may not be roadless. An official file for each unit is maintained at the BLM district office and is available for public review.

Non-Public Land Inholdings: All non-federal lands, including state or private land located within the inventory units. These lands are not calculated in the acreage being evaluated for wilderness nor are they being inventoried for wilderness characteristics.

Public Lands: Any land and interest in land owned by the United States and administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the Bureau of Land Management, without regard to how the United States acquired ownership, except:

- lands located on the Outer Continental Shelf
- lands held for the benefit of Indians, Aleuts, and Eskimos
- lands in which the United States retains the minerals, but the surface is private.

Only public land is being inventoried for wilderness purposes.

RARE II: The wilderness inventory on lands administered by the Secretary of Agriculture through the United States Forest Service. The acronym stands for Roadless Area Review and Evaluation and the "II" signifies that it is the second time the Forest Service has inventoried and evaluated the lands it administers for wilderness values.

Road: For the purposes of the BLM's wilderness inventory, the following definition applies: "The word 'roadless' refers to the absence of roads which have been improved and maintained by mechanical means to insure relatively regular and continuous use. A way maintained solely by the passage of vehicles does not constitute a road."

To clarify this definition, the following sub-definitions also apply:

"Improved and maintained" - Actions taken physically by man to keep the road open to vehicular traffic. 'Improved' does not necessarily mean formal construction. 'Maintained' does not necessarily mean annual maintenance.

"Mechanical means" - Use of hand or power machinery or tools.

"Relatively regular and continuous use" - Vehicular use which has occurred and will continue to occur on a relatively regular basis. Examples are: access roads for equipment to maintain a stock water tank or other established water sources; access roads to maintained recreation sites or facilities; or access roads to mining claims.

Roadless: Refers to the absence of roads which have been improved and maintained by mechanical means to insure relatively regular and continuous use.

Roadless Area: A roadless area is defined as any contiguous unit of land (irregardless of size or configuration) which lies between two or more roads and/or non-BLM lands. The key word in this definition is "contiguous." The word contiguous means being of the same boundary. Unless an inventory unit is completely dissected by the discovery of additional roads that result in the identification of two or more new roadless units under 5,000 acres, the original inventory unit still meets the definition of a contiguous roadless area. Cherrystem roads or deadend roads penetrating into a unit do not completely break the contiguous acreage of a unit. Therefore, they are part of the boundary of the unit and cannot be used to declare the land within the remainder of the unit "roaded."

Solitude: Outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation are wilderness characteristics examined in the intensive wilderness inventory. Factors contributing to opportunities for solitude are size, vegetative screening, topographic relief, vistas, and physiographic variety.

Supplemental Values: Features of ecological, geological, or other scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value that may be present in an inventory unit. These are not necessary criteria for wilderness characteristics, as is stated in the Wilderness Act of 1964, but must be assessed during the intensive wilderness inventory.

Way: A two-wheel track created only by the passage of vehicles. A "way" is not a road.

Wilderness: The definition contained in Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964 is as follows: "A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. Wilderness is an area of undeveloped federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.

Wilderness Area: An area formally designated by Congress as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

Wilderness Characteristics: Those characteristics of wilderness as described in Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act. These include size, naturalness, solitude, primitive and unconfined type of recreation, and supplemental values.

Wilderness Inventory: An evaluation of the public lands in the form of a written description and a map showing those lands that meet the wilderness criteria as established under Section 603(a) of FLPMA and Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act. The lands meeting the criteria will be referred to as Wilderness Study Areas (WSA's). Those lands identified as not meeting wilderness criteria will be released from further wilderness consideration.

Wilderness Review: The term used to cover the entire wilderness inventory, study, and reporting phases of the wilderness program of the BLM.

Wilderness Study Area (WSA): A Wilderness Study Area is a contiguous roadless area over 5,000 acres in size (or of sufficient size) within which can be found apparent naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude or for primitive and unconfined recreation. A WSA is merely the identification of the physical limits of the wilderness resource. It makes no attempt to determine the value of the wilderness resource compared to other resource values. Because a WSA is partially defined as a roadless area, the physical limit of that resource may be the physical edge of the road. WSA boundaries are required to be along roads unless the inventory of the roadless unit shows a reason for adjusting away from the road due to a lack of naturalness or a clear and obvious lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation.

D. Interim Management Policy (IMP)

During the period of the wilderness review and until Congress acts on the President's recommendations on which areas are suitable for wilderness designation, the Secretary of the Interior is required to manage lands having wilderness characteristics so as not to impair their suitability for preservation as wilderness, subject to certain exceptions and conditions. This management is referred to as "interim management" and is discussed in a BLM document entitled Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review, December 1979. This is available at any BLM office.

E. How Wilderness Characteristics Were Evaluated

1. Size

" . . . has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition . . ."

- Wilderness Act of 1964

Specifically, the size criteria will be satisfied for inventory units in the following situations and circumstances:

a. Roadless areas with over 5,000 acres of contiguous public lands. State or private lands are not included in making this acreage determination.

b. Any roadless island of the public lands of less than 5,000 acres.

c. Roadless areas of less than 5,000 acres of contiguous public lands where any one of the following apply:

- They are contiguous with lands managed by another agency which have been formally determined to have wilderness or potential wilderness values.

- The public has indicated strong support for study of a particular area of less than 5,000 acres and it is demonstrated that it is clearly and obviously of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition, and of a size suitable for wilderness management.

- They are contiguous with an area of less than 5,000 acres of other Federal lands administered by an agency with authority to study and preserve wilderness lands, and the combined total is 5,000 acres or more.

2. Naturalness

" . . . generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable . . ."

- Wilderness Act of 1964

This criteria states that areas must only appear to be primeval and untrammeled by man with man's developments permissable, yet substantially unnoticeable on the landscape. Acceptable imprints include fences, reservoirs, spring developments, constructed trails, bridges, fire towers, fire breaks, fire suppression facilities, pit toilets, fishery enhancement facilities, snow gauges, water quantity and quality measuring devices, and other scientific devices.

The presence of these human devleopments cannot be used to declare an inventory unit unnatural. Only when these developments are of such a number and distribution throughout a unit, or portion of the unit, that they become substantially noticeable to a casual observer can they be used to declare an entire unit or portion of the unit unnatural.

Imprints of man outside a unit are not normally considered in assessing the area's naturalness.

3. Solitude or Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

" . . . has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation . . ."

- Wilderness Act of 1964

Two key words appear here: "or" and "outstanding." Either opportunities for solitude or opportunities for primitive recreation must be present for an area to qualify as a WSA; both need not be present. These opportunities must be outstanding in order for an area to qualify as a WSA. Opportunities for either solitude or primitive recreation may exist in an inventory unit, but if these opportunities are not outstanding, the area does not qualify as a WSA.

The evaluation of opportunities for solitude during the inventory is based upon the ability of a unit of a given size, topographic relief and vegetative type to allow a visitor group to escape the sights and sounds of others within the unit as well as external influences (such as vehicle traffic on boundary roads or significant agricultural development and activity immediately adjacent to the unit.)

In order for an inventory unit to have outstanding opportunities for solitude it must be:

a. Large enough so that topographic relief can provide plentiful screening among visitors as well as provide opportunities for visitors to disperse throughout the unit. If topographic relief tends to concentrate visitors into small or narrow corridors within the unit, the corridors must be sufficiently long enough and/or provide plentiful topographic or vegetative screening to lessen the impact of the corridor effect.

b. Large enough so that vegetation can provide plentiful screening among visitors as well as not hinder the visitors' mobility throughout the unit. Land patterns of dense vegetation can create corridor effects.

The ability of vegetation to provide screening is dependent upon the height of the vegetation and its stand density in combination with topographic relief. Taller vegetation can provide excellent screening on both flat and steep topography if stand density is sufficient. In general, as topographic relief increases, stand density must also increase to provide the same amoung of screening because a visitor is more able to look over or through light density stands as the angle of slope increases. Likewise, low vegetation can provide greater screening on flat ground than on rolling or steep topography. Low vegetation can provide excellent screening on flat topography if the unit is large enough to provide sufficient distance for visitors or external influences to blend or disappear into the landscape. Not only can low vegetation on flat terrain provide screening, it can give a definite sense of remoteness, vastness or wide open space; adding to the achievement of a sense of solitude. The greater the topographic diversity of a unit, the smaller the unit can be to provide outstanding solitude.

The evaluation of the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation was based on a unit's size and ability to provide exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions. Exceptional natural features are those topographic and vegetative features which provide exceptional scenery, create a diversity of landforms and/or enable a visitor to achieve reasonable mobility within a unit, and would result in a strong recreation attraction to a unit for one or more types of activities.

A unit is considered to have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation if the overall unit size in combination with one or more of the factors contributing to exceptional natural features give a visitor a sense of non-confinement within an esthetically pleasing area. Some examples of areas where outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation can exist are:

a. In small units where topography and/or vegetation is such that there is a diversity of landforms to encounter and topographic relief readily permits mobility throughout the unit to make efficient use of the land available.

b. In large units where topography tends to concentrate visitors in confining narrow corridors and the scenic quality within the corridor is exceptional. In units where there are strong corridor effects, the unit must be sufficiently large enough, or the corridor long enough, to negate the sense of confinement. In addition, the corridor must be exceptionally scenic to encourage travel within the corridor.

c. In large units where topography and/or vegetation is such that there is a diversity of landforms to encounter, mobility may be difficult (but not confined to corridors).

Areas without diversity of landform or exceptional scenery may not offer outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation, irregardless of their size and the ease of mobility within them. An example would be a large sagebrush flat where travel across a unit would eventually result in a sense of monotony.

Examples of primitive and unconfined types of recreation are: hiking, backpacking, fishing, hunting, spelunking, horseback riding, mountain or rock climbing, river running, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, dog sledding, photography, bird watching, canoeing, kayaking, sailing, and sightseeing for botanical, zoological, or geological features. These opportunities include potential as well as present use.

4. Supplemental Values

" . . . ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value."

- Wilderness Act of 1964

The presence or lack of supplemental values, such as ecological geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical importance will not determine whether an inventory unit becomes a WSA. These values are not essential for WSA status; however, it is important that the presence or absence of these types of features in an area be noted.

5. Possibility of Returning Area to A Natural Condition

Many imprints of man have a significant impact on the naturalness of an area and are excluded from WSA's. When the impact of man's imprints is only moderate, there is the possibility of returning the area to a substantially unnoticeable level by natural processes or hand labor. This is dependent on the kind of imprint, the topography, the vegetation, the amount of rainfall, etc.

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A. Overview of Public Comments

The 90-day public comment period on the intensive inventory began on April 4 with a deadline of July 3. Comments were accepted and analyzed through the date of printing of this report, due to a change in the decision announcement date from September to November 14.

Over 3,200 comments were received from individuals and from a wide variety of organization interests.

Over 85 percent of the comments resulted from a nationwide effort on the part of conservationists to provide input to the BLM wilderness effort. For the most part these comments did not address specific inventory units and therefore did not contain unit-specific comments that could be utilized in the intensive inventory decision. The general statements on characteristics that were in these responses as well as the opinions for or against wilderness are being retained for use later in the study phase.

The remaining 15 percent of the total comments, generally were unit specific, with most of these providing comment on wilderness characteristics. Notable among these comments were the approximately 50 received that addressed the Idaho conservation groups' proposal for desert WSA's and another group of inputs that proposed an alternative "W" (addressing units in the Boise and Burley Districts only). It must be stressed that the content of these comments was not considered any differently than other comments.

One comment specific to wilderness characteristics that offered the BLM new information or that shed new light on an issue could change the decision on an inventory unit. Conversely, large numbers of comments opposing or supporting study area designation without reference to the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics, had little or no affect on the final decision.

Information concerning other resource values and potential resource conflicts in the inventory units will not be considered until the study phase of the wilderness review and did not affect the inventory decision.

The intent of the public comment period was to gather ideas on the adequacy of the inventory data and the correctness of the recommendations.

Documents and maps describing the Bureau's proposed decision were sent to everyone indicating an interest in the wilderness program. Open houses, workshops, and meetings were held throughout the state for the purpose of exchanging information with the public. The public was asked to comment on the wilderness characteristics as described in the Wilderness Act, namely--size, naturalness, outstanding solitude or outstanding primitive recreation opportunities, and supplemental values.

Sincere effort was made to share with the public the criteria applied to BLM-managed lands during this intensive inventory process.

B. How Comments Were Utilized

Every public comment received by the BLM during the public comment period was read, analyzed, and, when necessary, field checked for validity. The appropriate District Managers and/or district office wilderness staffs read each letter relating to their respective inventory units, and addressed the points raised in each comment. These comments are kept in the district file for the inventory unit(s). A copy of each comment was sent to the BLM State Office in Boise where all were reviewed and analyzed. If maps and photos were included with the comment, these are also filed at the district offices. The inventory unit files may be reviewed upon request.

Comments were given identification numbers as received in the State Office. The numbers, names of respondents, and dates received were recorded in a log book kept in the public affairs office. Copies were kept at the State Office by the Wilderness Coordinator and the Public Affairs Office.

A comment analysis sheet was designed for recording public comments by inventory unit. One sheet was made for each inventory unit receiving comment. Each response was individually read and analyzed, identification numbers recorded on the analysis sheets, and the remarks coded on the sheets using designated phrases.

After the conclusion of the public comment period, an overall statewide analysis was compiled by the State Office. This report provides an overview of the kind of comments received, makes available to the State Director and District Managers an analytical summary of public comment on the Idaho intensive inventory for their evaluation and use in the decision-making process, and documents and makes available to the public an organized record of their comments. This report can be examined in the district offices or the State Office in Boise.

The comments were summarized and displayed in various formats to give both the decision makers and the public a complete and indepth view of this inventory-generated collection of data.

Comments outside the scope of intensive inventory criteria were also received. While they could not influence the intensive inventory decisions, they will be retained by the appropriate district offices and later utilized in the study process.

The analysis of comments did not involve "vote-counting." Comments were examined for their informational value regarding the wilderness characteristics of an inventory unit.

Information provided by the public was carefully considered, and changes made when the comments revealed the presence or absence of wilderness characteristics that the BLM had not identified. The factors evaluated in the intensive inventory are somewhat subjective, so public input was critical in making these difficult decisions.

All areas identified as Wilderenss Study Areas will be further analyzed through the Bureau's Planning Process to determine which areas should receive a suitable or non-suitable recommendation for wilderness designation. These recommendations will eventually be forwarded to Congress for the final decision on possible designation of areas into the National Wilderness Preservation System.

III. FORMAT OF THIS REPORT

All wilderness inventory units which were intensively inventoried are included in this report. Some of these are identified as Wilderness Study Areas (WSA's) and some are not. The summary narratives are arranged by district; within each district section, the summaries for the units not identified as WSA's are separated from those identified as study areas. Inventory units are arranged in numerical order.

District prefix numbers are:
1 - Boise
2 - Burley
3 - Idaho Falls
4 - Salmon
5 - Shoshone
6 - Coeur d'Alene

The degree of detail both in the file documentation in the various offices and in the summaries presented here depends upon the size of the inventory unit, the number of imprints of man within the unit, the number of adjustments made since the initial inventory, and the extent and complexity of the public comment.

Non-public land inholdings are not calculated in the acreage inventoried for wilderness characteristics, nor are these lands themselves inventoried. In some cases, these inholdings are too small to be noted on the maps, but are mentioned in the narratives.

The state map that is being released with this report is 1 = 500,000 scale and gives the general boundary of each of the WSA's.

IV. SPECIAL INVENTORIES

A. STATELINE

The August 10, 1979, Initial Inventory final decision indicated that the final decision was being deferred for all inventory units in the southwestern portion of the State where the units were contiguous to BLM inventory units under evaluation in the adjoining States of Oregon and Utah. The reason for the deferral was to permit full coordination with the adjoining States in those decisions.

On December 14, 1979, the final decision for the initial inventory on the "Stateline" units in Idaho was announced which indicated the following units required intensive inventory to determine the presence of wilderness characteristics:

16-48a	Spring Creek	39,185 acres
16-48b	Owyhee River	33,708 "
16-48c	Little Owyhee River	26,817 "
16-53	South Fork Owyhee River	47,516 "
16-56a	Upper Little Owyhee River	4,309 "
16-59	Juniper Basin	15,248 "
16-70e	Oregon Butte	3,393 "
17-19	Upper Bruneau River	22,797 "
17-21	Jarbidge Addition	5,881 "
17-26	Salmon Falls Creek	5,977 "
22-1	Little Goose Creek	2,083 "
	Total	206,914 acres

During the protest period which ended on January 14, 1980, three letters of protest were received. After analysis of the protests, no changes were made and the final decision became effective on February 8, 1980. This announcement initiated a 30-day appeal period.

On February 28, 1980, the Owyhee Cattlemen's Association filed an appeal on the final decision to conduct intensive inventory on all 11 of the units listed above.

In order to utilize the 1979 season, the field work for the intensive inventory was accomplished by the Boise and Burley District Offices for their respective units. Release of any proposed decisions on this intensive inventory will not take place until a decision has been rendered on the appeal.

It should be noted that in Idaho we are not into any comment/protest/appeal period on these Stateline units, but are, as of the printing date of this report, awaiting further action by the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA).

B. SAND DUNES

The August 10, 1979, Initial Inventory final decision to drop three wilderness units located in the Idaho Falls District as clearly and obviously lacking wilderness values was appealed to the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA) on October 4, 1979, by the Idaho Representative of the Wilderness Society. On January 11, 1980, the IBLA remanded the case to Idaho BLM for further consideration.

After analysis of all data available, the inventory decision for these units was re-issued on February 8, 1980. This final decision indicated that it was not clear and obvious that the following units are lacking in wilderness values, therefore, they should be subjected to an intensive inventory in order to determine the presence of wilderness characteristics:

35-3	Sand Mountain	27,670 acres
35-4	Black Knoll	7,095 "
35-5	Big Sandy	10,735 "
	Total	45,500 acres

The release of the final decision initiated a 30-day protest period which concluded on March 10, 1980. During the protest period 35 letters of protest were received on the "Sand Dune" units.

After analysis of the protest letters it was determined that no new facts were presented that would alter the decision to conduct intensive inventory on the units.

During the 30-day appeal period, an appeal was received from an individual from St. Anthony, Idaho. Thus, as of the printing date of this report, we are not into any comment/protest/appeal period on these units, but are awaiting further action by the IBLA.

In order to utilize the 1979 season, the field work for this intensive inventory was accomplished by the District Office. Release of the proposed decision on this intensive inventory will not take place until a decision has been rendered by the IBLA.

C. CHALLIS

The timetable for conducting the intensive inventory was accelerated for wilderness inventory units in the Challis Planning Area of the Salmon District.

The final decision on this intensive inventory as announced on January 4, 1980, indicated that the following inventory units possessed wilderness characteristics and were identified as Wilderness Study Areas (WSA's):

46-11	Corral-Horse Basin
46-13	Boulder Creek
46-14	Jerry Peak
46-14a	Jerry Peak West

During the protest period which ended on February 4, 1980, one letter of protest was received, protesting the identification of the above four units as WSA's. After analysis of this protest, no changes were made to the final decision, which became effective on February 29, 1980.

During the 30-day appeal period, two appeals were filed: (1) by the Idaho Cattlemen's Association, and (2) by the Tri-county Cattlemen's Association, with both appeals covering all four of the units identified as Wilderness Study Areas.

It should be noted that we are not into any comment/protest/appeal period on these units, but are, as of the printing date of this report, awaiting further action by the IBLA.

D. OWYHEE

Data in this section represents the announcement of the final decision on the protests to the Owyhee intensive inventory.

The timetable for conducting the Intensive Inventory was accelerated for wilderness inventory units in the Owyhee Planning area of the Boise District.

The final decision on this intensive inventory as announced on January 16, 1980, indicated that ten inventory units possessed wilderness characteristics and were identified as Wilderness Study Areas (WSA's).

During the protest period which ended on February 15, 1980, a number of letters of protest were received protesting the identification of all ten of the units as WSA's. In addition, several letters were received protesting the final decision to drop four units (16-26, 16-28, 16-36, and 16-49b) as lacking in wilderness characteristics.

As many of these protest letters were quite specific and detailed, some time was required and field checking necessary before an adequate analysis could be completed and a final decision made on the Owyhee protests.

The analysis has now been completed with the final decision announced as follows:

Owyhee Area Protest Decision

Unit Number	Unit Name	Acres Identified As WSA's	WSA Acres Deleted/Added As Result of Protest
16-40	North Fork Owyhee River	55,147	
16-41	Horsehead Spring	6,211	
16-42	Squaw Creek Canyon	11,379	
16-44	Deep Creek-Nickel Creek	11,510	
16-45	Middle Fork Owyhee River	13,336	
16-47	West Fork Red Canyon	12,882	- 1,828
16-49a	Deep Creek-Owyhee River	72,083	+ 80
16-49d	Yatahoney Creek	9,331	
16-49e	Battle Creek	31,540	1/
16-52	Upper Owyhee River	12,682	

Note: Units 16-26, 16-28, 16-36, and 16-49b previously identified as lacking in wilderness characteristics, will remain in that status.

1/ Acreage remains the same, however, a short cherrystem road was added in the southwest portion of the unit.

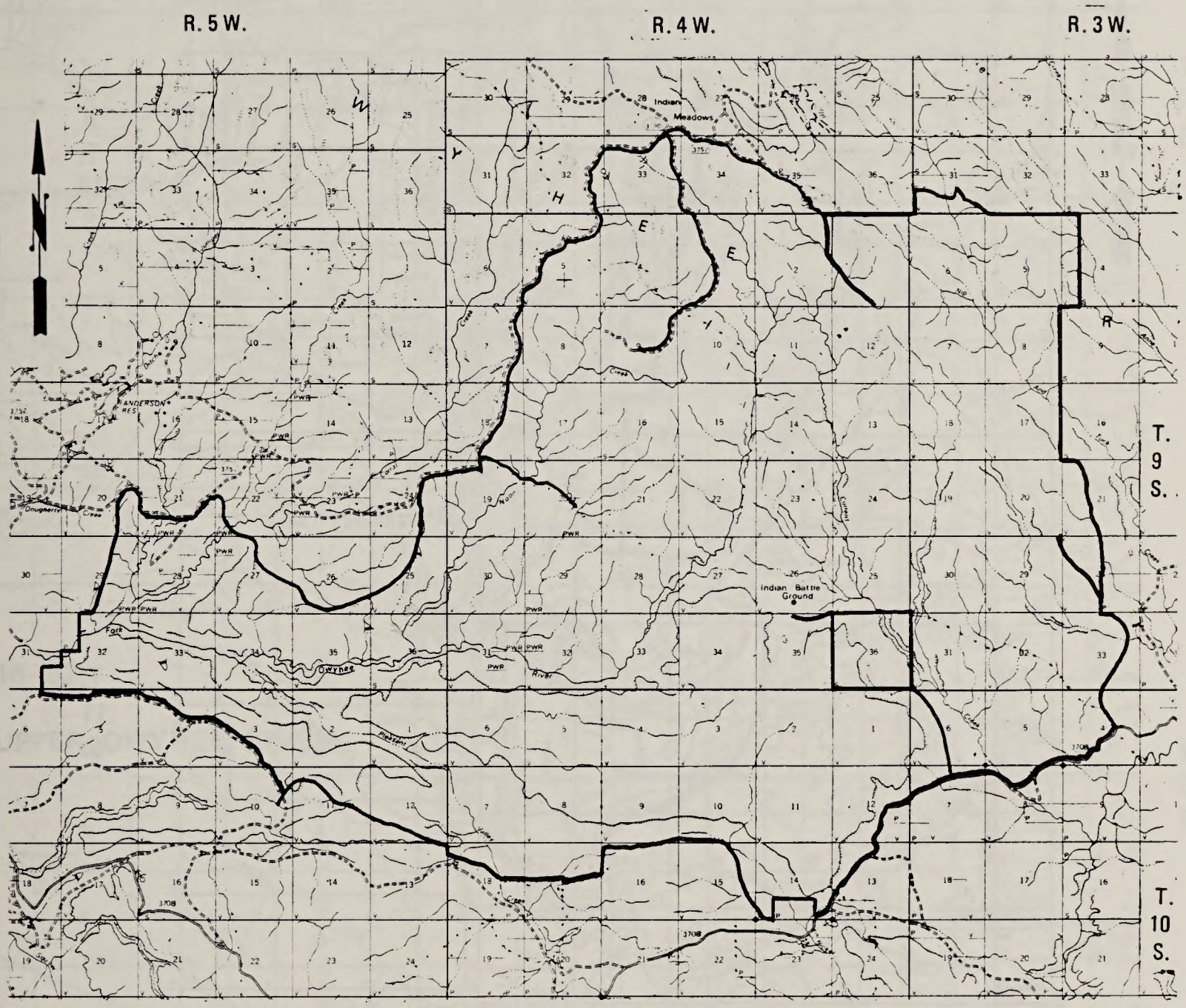
All of the individuals and organizations that filed protests to the Owyhee decision have received responses indicating the preliminary findings on the evaluation of protests. The following narratives are provided only for those units where the protest decision has resulted in a change in boundary and/or acreage of the unit.

This final decision on the Owyhee area is now subject to appeal. Appeals to the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA) will be processed in accordance with the policy and procedures in Title 43, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 4 and as amended in 45 FR (Federal Register) 5713.

For further information on the Owyhee Area inventory, contact the Boise District Office.

16–40

NORTH FORK OWYHEE RIVER



1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

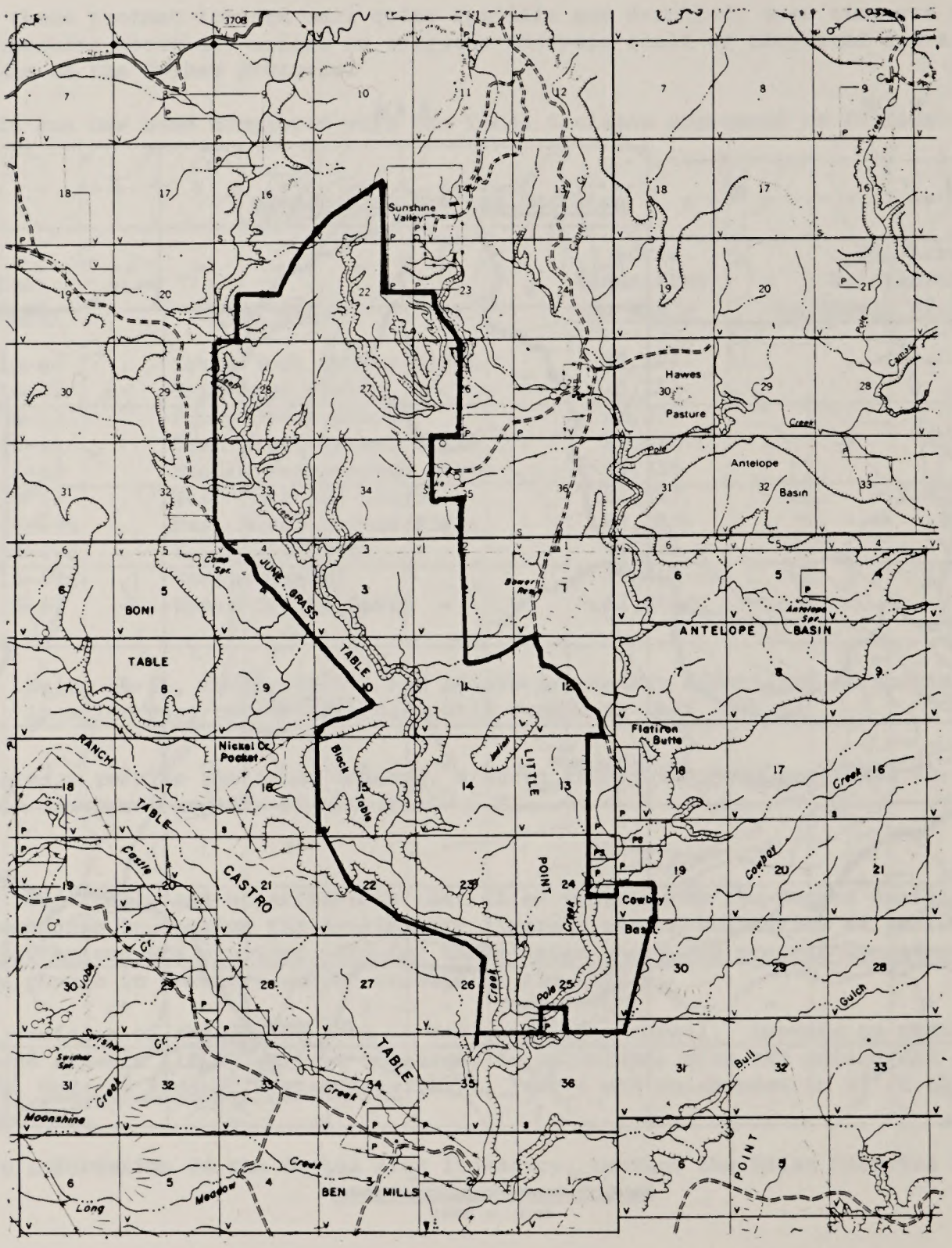
AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

DEEP CREEK – NICKEL CREEK

R. 3 W. R. 2 W.

T. 10 S.

T. 11 S.



1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

R. 2 W.

R. 1 W.

T. 14 S.

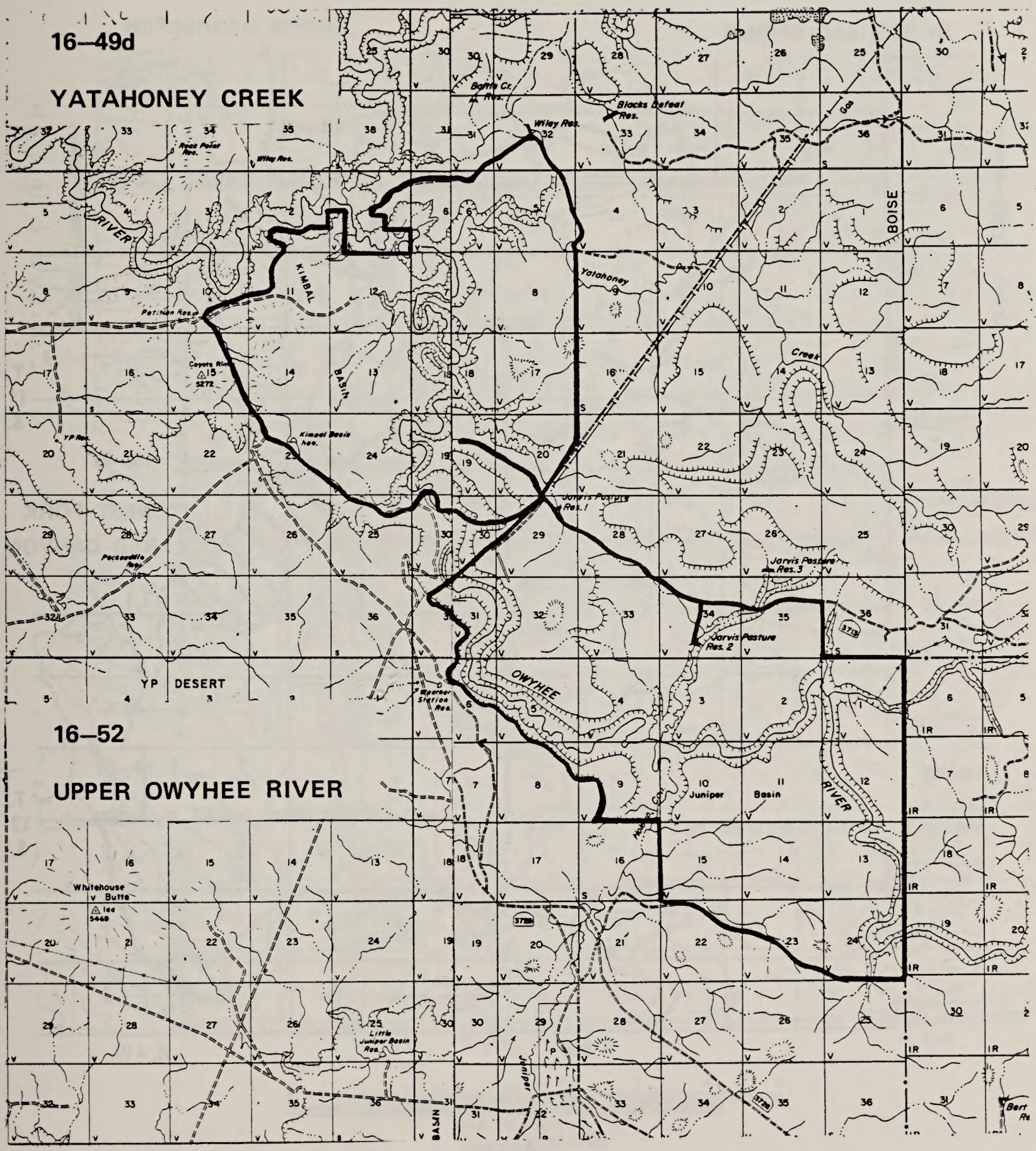
T. 15 S.

16–49d

YATAHONEY CREEK

16–52

UPPER OWYHEE RIVER



1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

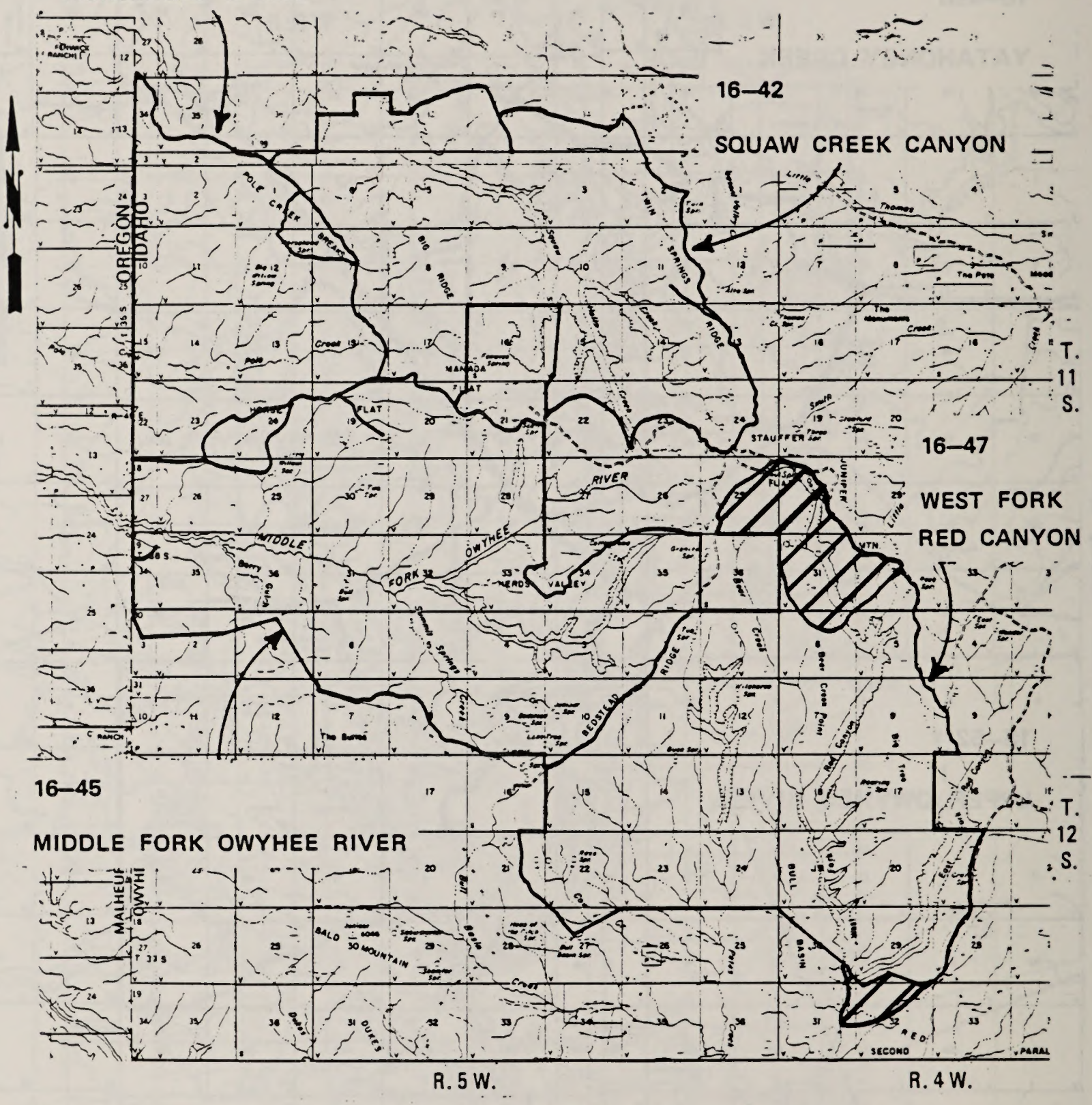
LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

16–41

HORSEHEAD SPRING



1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

16–41

HORSEHEAD SPRING

16–42

SQUAW CREEK CANYON

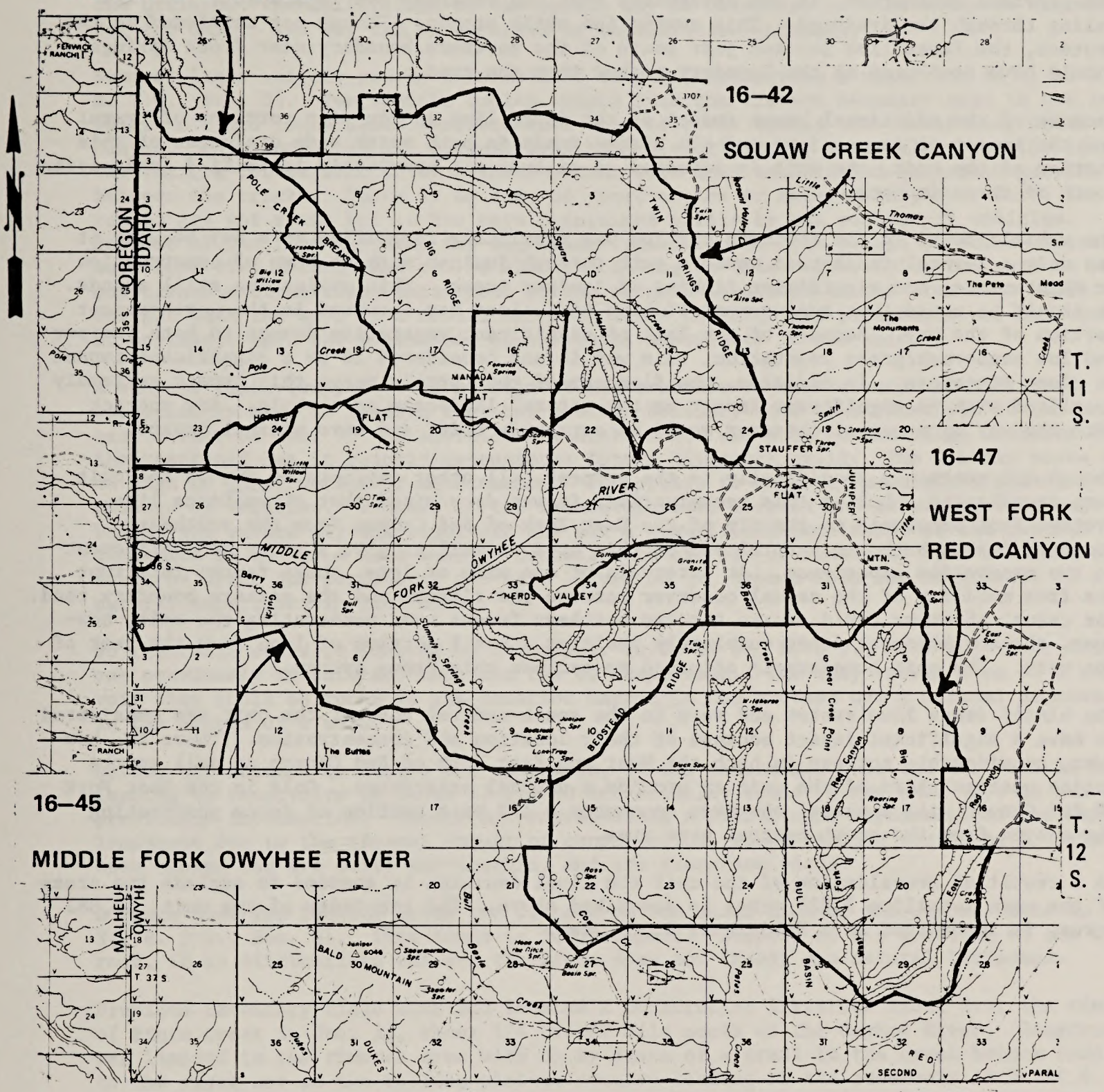
16–47

WEST FORK

RED CANYON

16–45

MIDDLE FORK OWYHEE RIVER



16-47 West Fork Red Canyon

The naturalness of Unit 16-47 was questioned primarily because of a bladed fence line and two roads running into the unit, one in the northern and one in the southern portion.

The bladed fence line had been previously inventoried and evaluated. However, an additional hiking trip down the West Fork of Red Canyon found that the fence line runs down the bottom of the canyon for about 1/2 mile more than previously thought. However, in this 1/2 mile, the fence line is not bladed. The fence line does have a significant impact upon the natural character of the canyon as well as the sense of unconfined recreation and gets in the way of enjoying free mobility in the canyon bottom.

The northern road/way into the unit was also previously inventoried and evaluated. In the previous evaluation, it was determined that the road/way was inescapable when traveling through the drainage. This evaluation still stands. Though not mentioned in the protest, the fence line located just south of the northern boundary near Trout Springs should have been used as the boundary rather than the road.

Because of the additional known impact of the fence line in the main corridor of travel, and the impact of fence lines and old bladed roads in both major side drainages of this portion of the unit, the unit is adjusted to exclude all previously identified lands lying north of these impacts.

The vehicle route in the southern portion was previously identified as a way because it was only a 2-wheel track that wound a path through juniper with no sign of construction or maintenance, nor significant limbing of juniper trees. This evaluation still stands. It should be noted that some recent limbing of juniper has occurred in the northernmost portion of the way. Because of the lack of significant vegetative damage to both juniper and low sagebrush/grass vegetation, this way is not considered to be a significant impact at close distances. In addition, the flatness of the terrain makes this impact extremely localized with no significant impact on the natural landscape as a whole. Any contact with the way by a casual observer would be extremely brief and have minimal impact.

Though not mentioned specifically in the protest, all other imprints of man in the unit were reevaluated. During this reevaluation, it was determined that three fence line systems that penetrate to the rim of the East Fork of Red Canyon from the southeast boundary impact both the naturalness of this area as well as give a sense of confinement to the recreation experience. At intervals of one mile or less, these fences interrupt the free mobility of the casual observer between the rimrock and the eastern boundary road. The casual observer could escape the two northern fences upon penetrating the unit, however, the southernmost fence completely isolates a small portion of land from the rest of the unit. The unit boundary is adjusted to exclude this fence system.

The bladed fence line system and ways in the south-central core of the unit are considered to have a significant impact because of their location and concentration. There is, however, considerable acreage in both the West and East Fork of Red Canyon as well as the entire western third of the unit to provide a natural experience. Only in the West Fork of Red Canyon will a casual observer encounter a 1/2 mile section of fence penetrating the canyon from the south-central core area.

As a result of reevaluation of the unit the final decision is amended to exclude two areas of the unit totalling 1,828 acres as described above. The remainder of the unit, 12,882 acres, is identified as a Wilderness Study Area.

16-49a Deep Creek-Owyhee River

The naturalness of Unit 16-49a was questioned because of the number of existing known imprints of man within the unit and boundary roads (particularly cherrystem roads) as well as four internal roads, a reservoir and a fence line.

A vehicle route was located in T.13 S., R. 3 W., Secs. 28 and 33. This vehicle route consists of a 2-wheel track from the cherrystem boundary road in Sec. 28 in a southwest direction over a small saddle. There is no sign of construction or maintenance, therefore, the route is not a road, but rather a way maintained solely by the passage of vehicles. Because of its location on the hillside, it is visible from portions of the plateau country to the east. However, the wheel tracks do not represent a major scar on the face of the hill nor a significant impairment of the natural landscape. The spring development located nearby in Sec. 28, however, does represent a major scar on the hillside. Rehabilitation of the spring may be necessary if wilderness is recommended for the unit. The way can be expected to rehabilitate naturally.

Several light vehicle tracks were located in association with a reservoir in T. 12 S., R. 2 W., Sec. 34. Two vehicle routes extend from the eastern boundary road to the reservoir. A third route heads westward from the reservoir toward the rim of Deep Creek Canyon. This route rapidly deteriorates into a cattle trail when halfway to the canyon. The vehicle routes consist of 2-wheel tracks with well established sagebrush growing between the tracks. There is no sign of construction or maintenance, therefore, the routes are not roads but rather ways maintained solely by the passage of vehicles. Because of the flat terrain, the sagebrush vegetation is high enough to screen these ways from view except when one is almost standing on them. Therefore, the ways do not constitute a significant impairment of the natural landscape in the area as a whole. Contact with the ways by a casual observer would be brief and peripheral and have little or no impact upon the obtainment of a natural experience in the unit.

A vehicle route (way) showing no sign of construction or maintenance was previously inventoried in Sec. 10 leading from the eastern boundary road to a reservoir in the northeast corner of Sec. 9. An additional vehicle route was located extending westward from the reservoir but it quickly degenerates into a livestock trail. The vehicle route shows no sign of construction or maintenance. It appears to be a way maintained solely by the passage of vehicles. Because of the relatively flat terrain and screening from sagebrush, the entire way and reservoir are not a significant impairment of the natural landscape in the area as a whole. Contact with the way or reservoir by a casual observer would be brief and peripheral and have little or no impact upon the obtainment of a natural experience in the unit.

No reservoir could be located by helicopter in T. 12 S., R. 2 W., Sec. 17, other than the one previously inventoried near the rim of Deep Creek. The only resemblance of a reservoir that could be found in the location mapped in the protest was a natural depression in the bottom of a wash.

During the attempt to locate the reservoir, it was determined that the two vehicle routes leading to reservoirs in Secs. 17 and 20 are actually roads rather than ways as had been previously inventoried. Though not representing a significant impairment of the natural landscape due to the minimal amount of construction, these vehicle routes have obviously been bladed and are still serviceable, and are therefore roads.

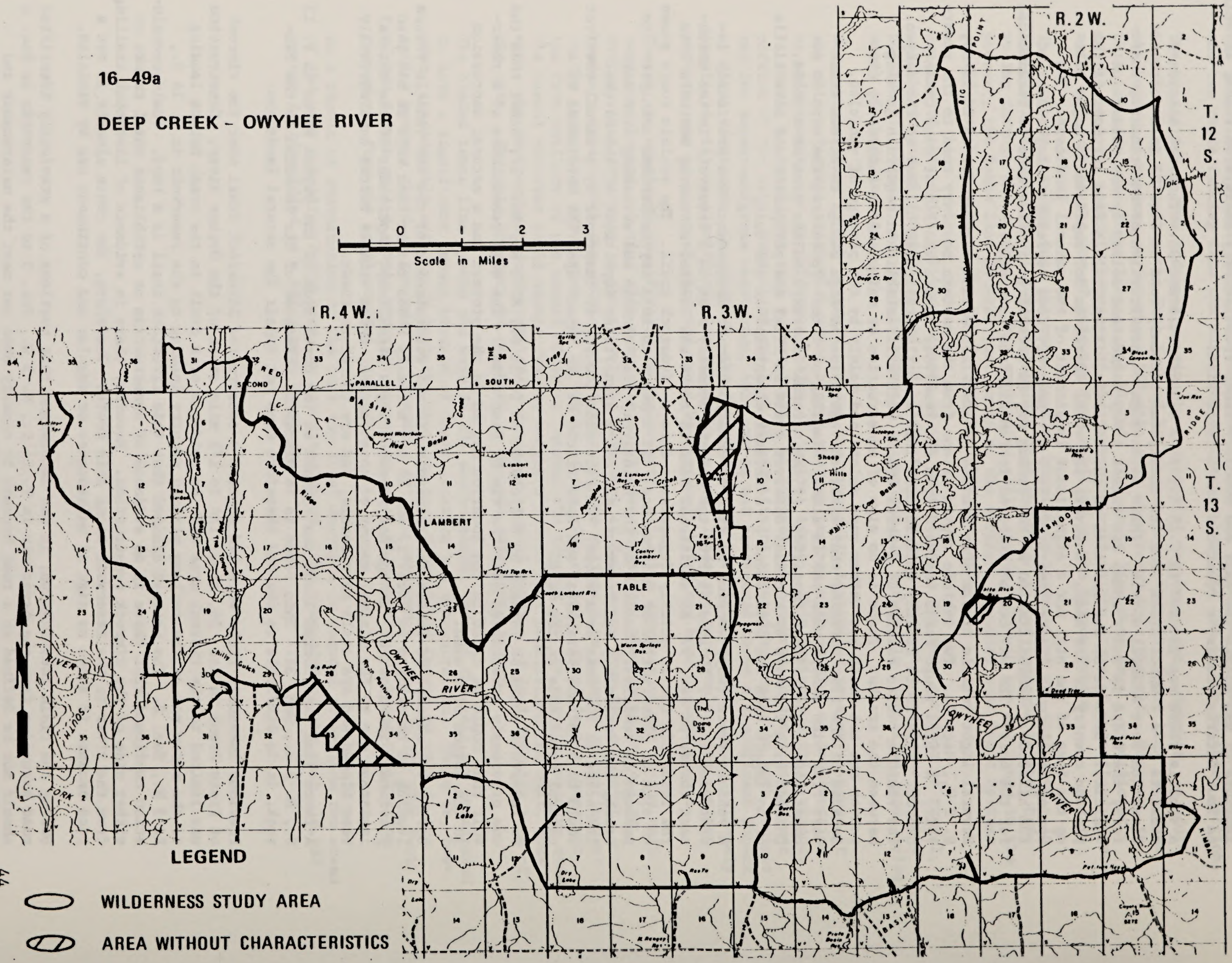
A fence line was located about the rimrock on the north side of the Owyhee River in T. 13 S., R. 2 W., Sec. 31. This fence is in disrepair. Because of its location on the rimrock, it is difficult to see and therefore does not impair the natural landscape.

Previous inventory field work had located a constructed livestock trail over the rimrock of Piute Creek in Sec. 36, about 1/4 to 1/2 mile south of the Owyhee River. Construction was limited to the rimrock area with no evidence of a trail in the creek bottom leading to the river nor on the rolling plateau country leading to the reservoir in T. 14 S., R. 3 W., Sec. 2. The protest claimed that this livestock trail is a road. Field reevaluation confirmed that there is no evidence of construction or established wheel tracks on either side of the rimrock construction. However, there is evidence of livestock trailing from the river to the reservoir along this route. Therefore, the route clearly is not a road because it shows no sign of maintenance or regular and continuous use by vehicles.

During the field reevaluation, it was determined that portions of a previously identified road extending from the reservoir in T. 14 S., R. 3 W., Sec. 3 to the reservoir in Sec. 2 should not be defined as a road because it clearly does not meet the maintenance and regular and continuous use requirement. From where this vehicle route leaves the flat plateau area in the NE 1/4 of Sec. 3 and proceeds down a wash into Sec. 2, it is heavily bladed, however, the old road bed has been badly eroded and overgrown with sagebrush and is no longer passable. There is evidence of wheel tracking around this area as well as along most of the route to the reservoir in Sec. 2. Though much of the route is still passable, the abundance and size of sagebrush and other vegetation in the old road bed

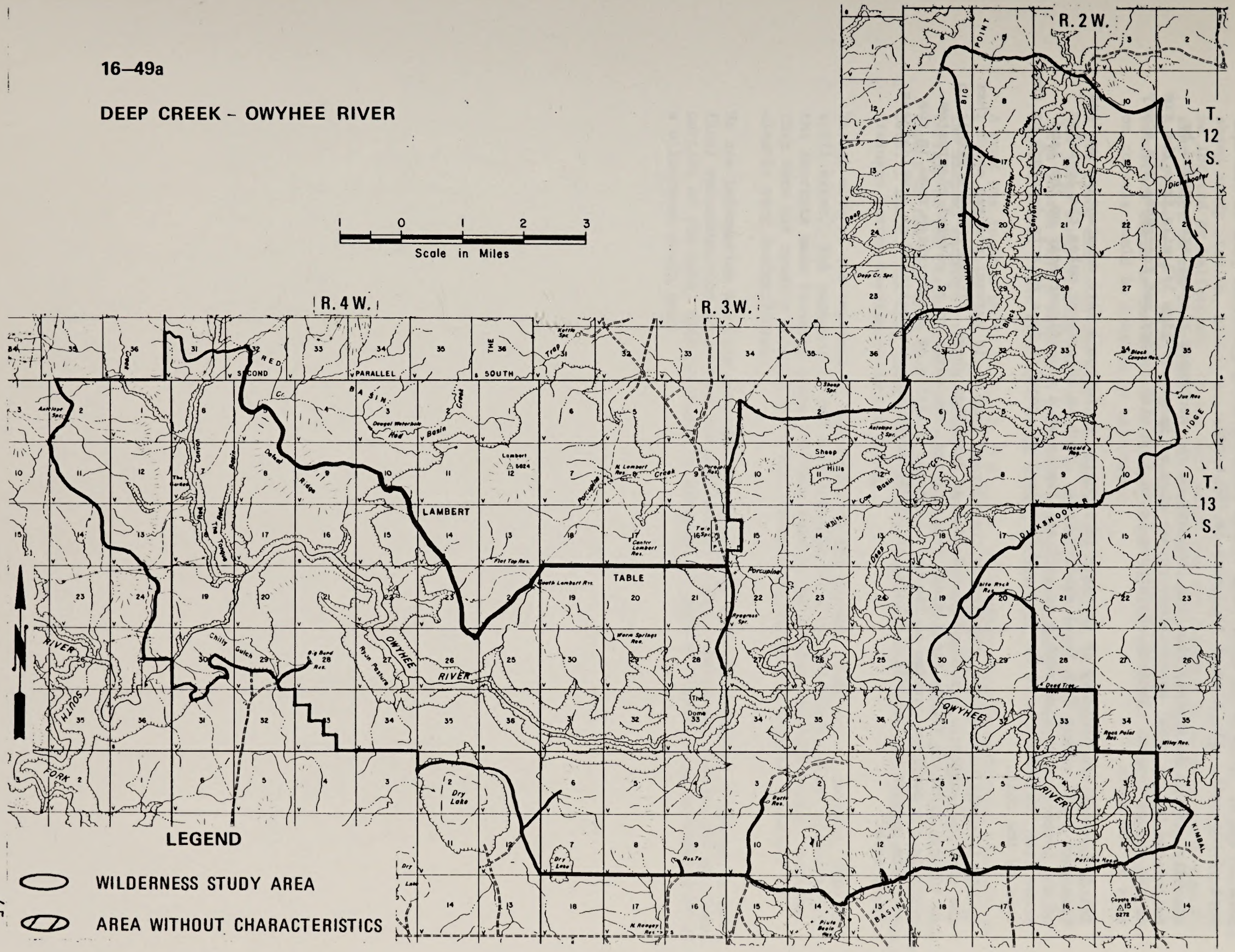
16–49a

DEEP CREEK - OWYHEE RIVER



16–49a

DEEP CREEK – OWYHEE RIVER



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

indicate that it does not receive regular and continuous use even to the point of not being maintained by the passage of vehicles.

During the field reevaluation, it was determined that the bladed fence line in T. 13 S., R. 3 W., Secs. 3 and 10 should be the boundary of the study area rather than the road in Secs. 4 and 9. This major fence line system isolates a small parcel of land from the rest of the unit. The size of this area is 460 acres.

Secondly, it was determined that the boundary on the southwest plateau area should be deliniated by the legal subdivisions rather than an imaginary line 1/2 mile from the rim of the Owyhee Canyon. Such an adjustment is in line with policy and increases the study area by 600 acres.

Third, the eastern boundary of the unit is adjusted to follow a very substantial way and livestock trail rather than legal subdivisions. Such an adjustment makes the location of the boundary more discernable as well as eliminates a significant scar on the landscape from the periphery of the unit. This adjustment results in a 60 acre decrease in the size of the unit.

No new information has been supplied by the protest that would warrant changes other than the small adjustments in the unit boundaries as described above. These changes result in an 80 acre increase in the final study area acreage, the addition of several cherrystem roads in the northern portion of the unit, and the deletion of a cherrystem road in the southern portion of the unit. A total of 70,083 acres is now identified as a Wilderness Study Area.

16-49e Battle Creek

The naturalness of unit 16-49e was questioned because of the previously uninventoried imprints of man, including a spring/water tank, old stoves and corrals, a gap fence and sheep study station, mining activity, and three roads. The developed spring could not be located by helicopter. It may well exist but its presence is clearly not a significant impact on the naturalness of the area. No road or wheel tracks could be located by helicopter in T. 13 S., R. 1 W., Sec. 3. The only evidence of disturbance was a livestock trail in the shallow drainage bottom leading to Battle Creek. The old stoves or corrals could be located by helicopter.

A gap fence exists in the side drainage of Battle Creek in T. 13 S., R. 2 W., Sec. 25. The sheep study station also exists in Sec. 25. The structure consists of a number of large wooden panels used as a temporary animal confinement pen during the release of bighorn sheep. This structure could easily be removed.

A road was located in T. 13 S., R. 2 W., Sec. 26 leading from the southwest boundary to a rock corral structure. The road was obviously bladed and is still readily passable. The minimal amount of rock movement involved with the road and the relatively flat terrain of the region makes this road visible from only extremely close distances. Its impact on the area as a whole is minimal. No road could be located in T. 13 S., R. 1 W., Secs. 5 and 8. The only disturbance noted in the area was a livestock trail in the shallow drainage bottom leading to Battle Creek.

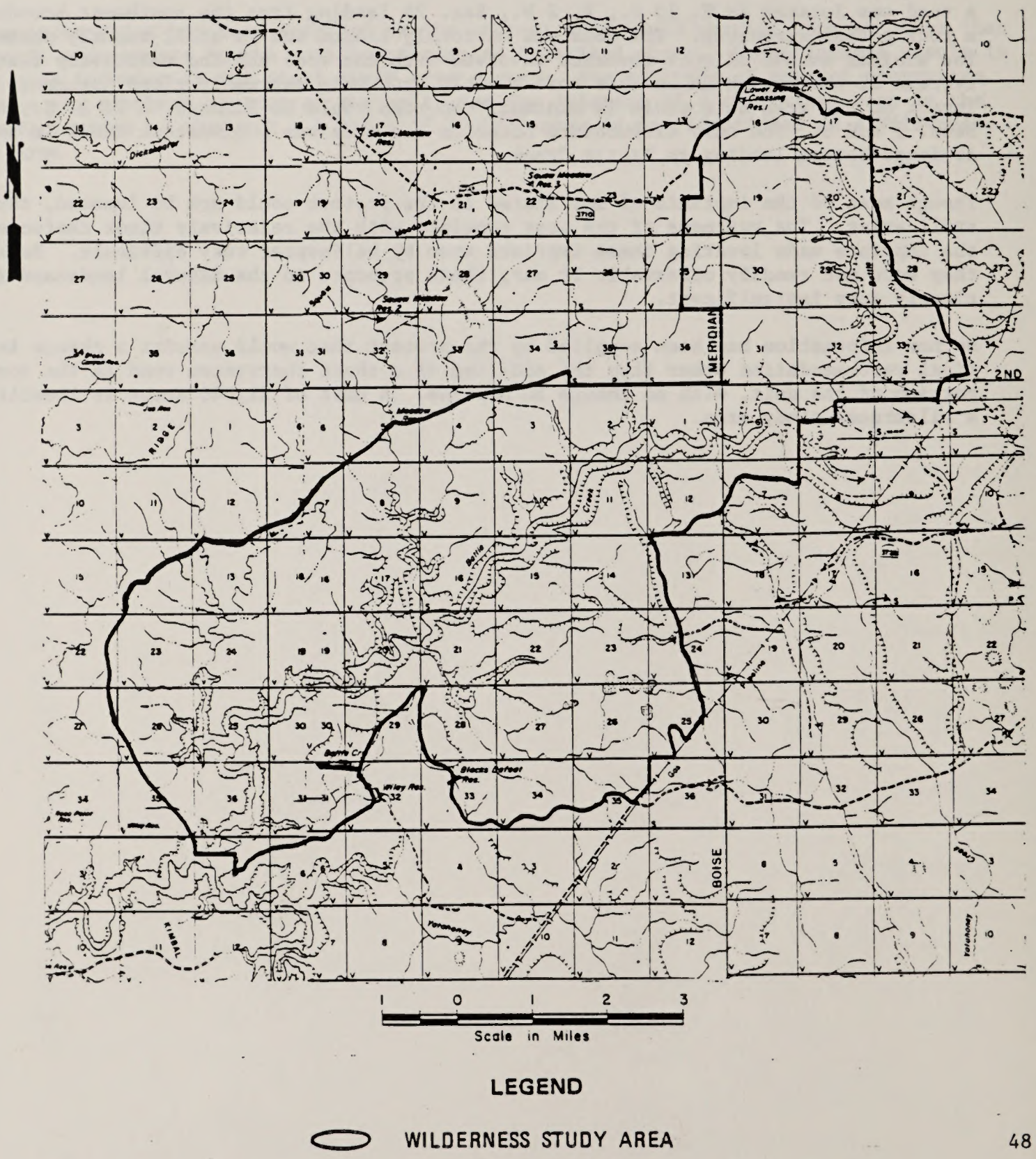
Though most of the imprints of man stated in the protest could not be located, they may still exist. The vastness of the area combined with the relatively minor character of the imprints made locating these imprints even by helicopter very difficult. Because they were not readily observable by air, their presence in the natural landscape is clearly very insignificant.

No new information has been supplied by the protest that would warrant a change in the final recommendation other than the addition of a short cherrystem road in the southwest portion of the unit, with no change in acreage. A unit of 31,540 acres is identified as a wilderness study area.

16–49e

BATTLE CREEK

R. 1 W. R. 1 E.



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

16—49e

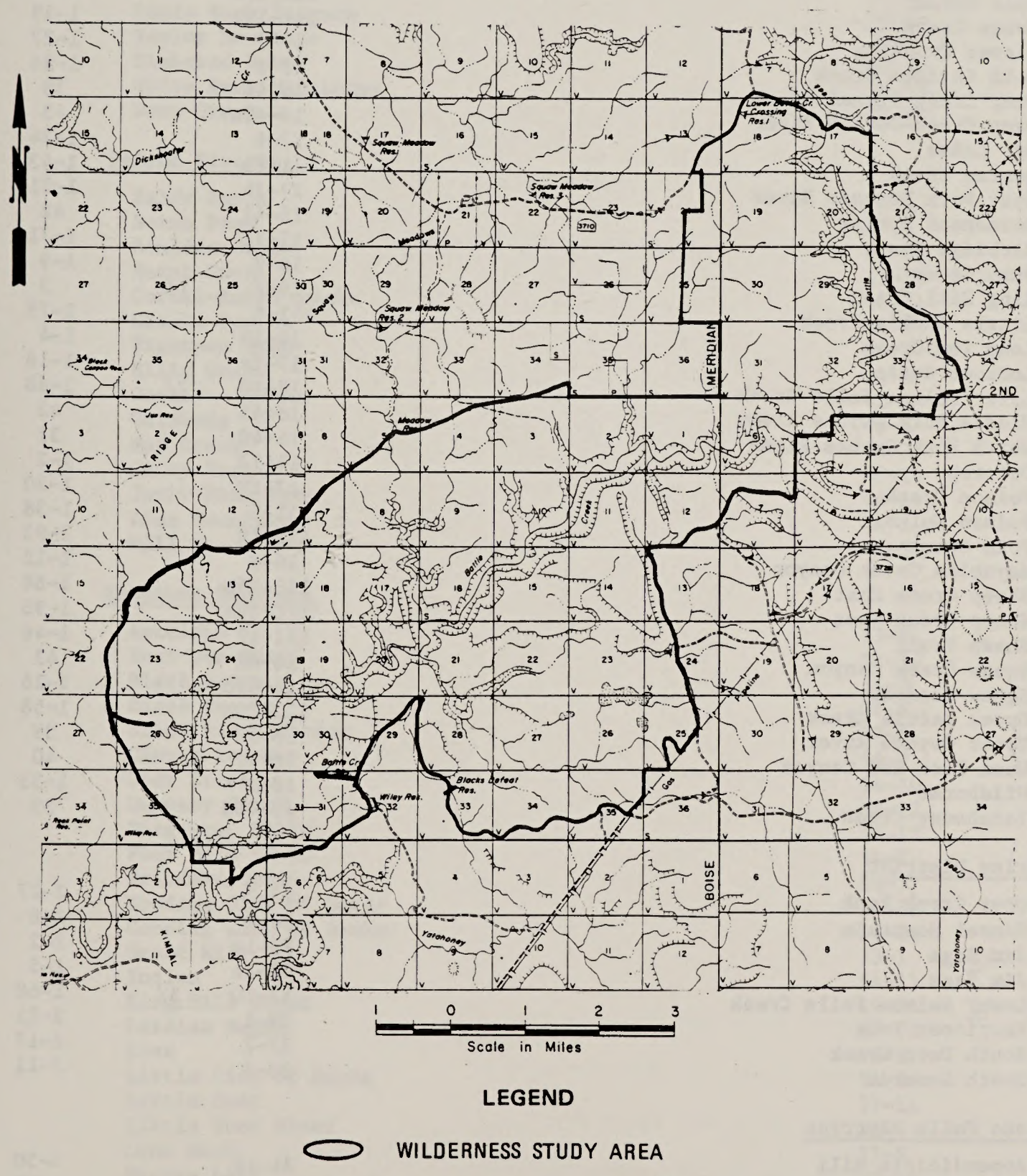
BATTLE CREEK

R. 1 W

R. 1 E.

T. 12 S.

T. 13 S.



1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

APPENDIX A

ALPHABETICAL INDEX - ALL INVENTORY UNITS

Unit Name	Inventory Number		Page
Boise District			
Battle Creek	16-49e		47
Bennett Creek	14-21		1-7
Big Hill	111-7a		1-41
Big Jack's Creek	111-7c		1-84
Big Springs	111-20a		1-58
Box Creek	110-91a		1-76
Bruneau River	111-17		1-88
Bull Basin	111-21		1-61
Bull Gulch	111-19b		1-52
Camas Creek	111-19a		1-49
Clover Crossing	17-7		1-27
Cold Springs Creek	19-1		1-36
Deep Creek-Nickel Creek	16-44		38
Deep Creek-Owyhee River	16-49a		43
Dry Lakes	17-6		1-24
Duncan Creek	111-7b		1-43
East Fork Bruneau River	17-1b		1-21
Horsehead Spring	16-41		42
Jarbidge River	17-11		1-71
Jump Creek	16-2		1-9
King Hill Creek	19-2	1/	3
Little Jack's Creek	111-6		1-78
Long Tom Creek	14-19		1-4
Lookout Butte	17-1a		1-18
Lower Salmon Falls Creek	17-10	2/	1-68
Middle Fork Owyhee River	16-45		42
North Fork Owyhee River	16-40		37
Outcrop	11-17		1-2
Poison Creek	17-12		1-30
Poison Gulch	111-5		1-38
Pole Creek	111-18		1-93
Reynolds Creek Canyon	16-9		1-12
Sheep Creek East	111-36b		1-64
Sheep Creek West	111-36a		1-96
Sheep Trail	111-12		1-46
Squaw Creek Canyon	16-42		42
Squaw Meadows	16-49c		1-16
Upper Battle Creek	111-20b		1-58
Upper Owyhee River	16-52		39
West Fork Red Canyon	16-47		40
Wildhorse	18-1		1-33
Yatahoney Creek	16-49d		39
Burley District			
Deep Creek Peak	27-2		2-17
Hanzel Mountain	26-1		2-8
Jim Sage	23-1a		2-2
Jim Sage	23-1c		2-5
Lower Salmon Falls Creek	17-10	3/	1-68
Petticoat Peak	28-1		2-21
South Deep Creek	27-2		2-17
South Samaria	26-3		2-11
Idaho Falls District			
Appendicitis Hill	31-14		3-50
Bear Point	33-13		3-31
Bear Trap	33-23		3-42
Black Canyon	32-9		3-59
Burnt Creek	45-12	4/	4-20
Cedar Butte	33-4		3-62
Conant Valley Islands	34-4		10
Cottontail	33-7		3-25
Cox's Place	33-22		3-40

Unit Name	Inventory Number		Page
Idaho Falls District (Cont.)			
Deadman Canyon	31-11		3-4
Dry Hollow	31-15		3-8
Firth Quad Islands	33-24		3-45
Great Rift	33-1	1/	4
Hawley Mountain	32-3		3-56
Hell's Half Acre	33-15		3-65
Henry's Lake	35-77		12
Illinois	31-10		3-2
Moreland Quad Islands	33-25		3-47
Morgan	33-16		3-37
Mosby Butte	33-14		3-34
Pass Creek	32-16		3-17
Pine Creek Islands	34-3		8
Rye Grass	33-6		3-22
Sands Canyon	32-2		3-11
Skull	33-5		3-19
Split Top	33-12		3-28
Table Rock Islands	34-2		5
Taylor Mountain	32-4		3-14
Timbered Dome	31-13		3-6
White Knob Mountains	31-17		3-53
Worm Creek	37-77		13
Salmon District			
Baldy Basin	42-6		4-4
Borah Peak	47-4		4-23
Boulder Creek	46-13		16
Burnt Creek	45-12	5/	4-20
Corral-Horse Basin	46-11		15
Cronks Canyon	44-9		4-12
Eighteen Mile	43-3		4-17
Ellis Creek	44-4		4-10
Geertson Creek	41-3		4-2
Goldburg	45-1		14
Hat Creek	44-3		4-8
Jerry Peak	46-14		15
Jerry Peak West	46-14a		16
King Mountain	44-2		4-6
Mill Creek	45-5		4-14
Shoshone District			
Antelope	57-3		5-18
Bear Den Butte	57-14		5-73
Black Butte	54-2		18
Black Canyon	54-6		5-49
Black Ridge Crater	57-4		5-21
Clover Creek	54-9		5-10
Deer Creek	54-10		5-55
Dempsey Creek	54-12		5-14
Forgotten Hills	54-13		5-16
Four Mile Bench	54-7		5-8
Friedman Creek	53-5		17
Gooding City of Rocks	54-8a		5-52
Gooding City of Rocks	54-8b		5-52
Great Rift	33-1	5/	4
Indian	54-11		5-12
King Hill Creek	19-2	3/	3
Laidlaw Butte	57-12		5-33
Lava	56-2		5-58
Little City of Rocks	54-5		5-46
Little Deer	57-11		5-70
Little Wood River	53-4		17
Lone Rock	57-5		5-24
MacRae Lake	57-16		5-42
Pagari	57-7		5-30
Point	57-15		5-39
Potter Butte	57-13		5-36
Preacher Creek	54-3		5-2
Rattlesnake Canyon	54-4		5-5
Raven's Eye	57-10		5-67
Sand Butte	57-8		5-64

Unit Name	Inventory Number	Page
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Shale Butte	57-2	5-61
Shoshone	59-7	5-75
Wildhorse	57-6	5-27
Coeur d'Alene District		
Big Canyon	62-4	6-10
Confluence	62-2	6-7
Crystal Lake	61-10	6-17
Grandmother Mountain	61-15a	6-20
Grandmother Mountain	61-15b	6-20
Hideaway Island	61-6c	6-2
Marshall Mountain	62-10	6-26
Rochat Creek	61-9	6-5
Selkirk Crest	61-1	6-14
Snowhole Rapids	62-1	6-23

1/ Portion of unit is in the Shoshone District.

2/ Portion of unit is in the Burley District.

3/ Portion of unit is in the Boise District.

4/ Portion of unit is in the Salmon District.

5/ Portion of unit is in the Idaho Falls District.

APPENDIX B

NARRATIVE SUMMARIES

BOISE DISTRICT

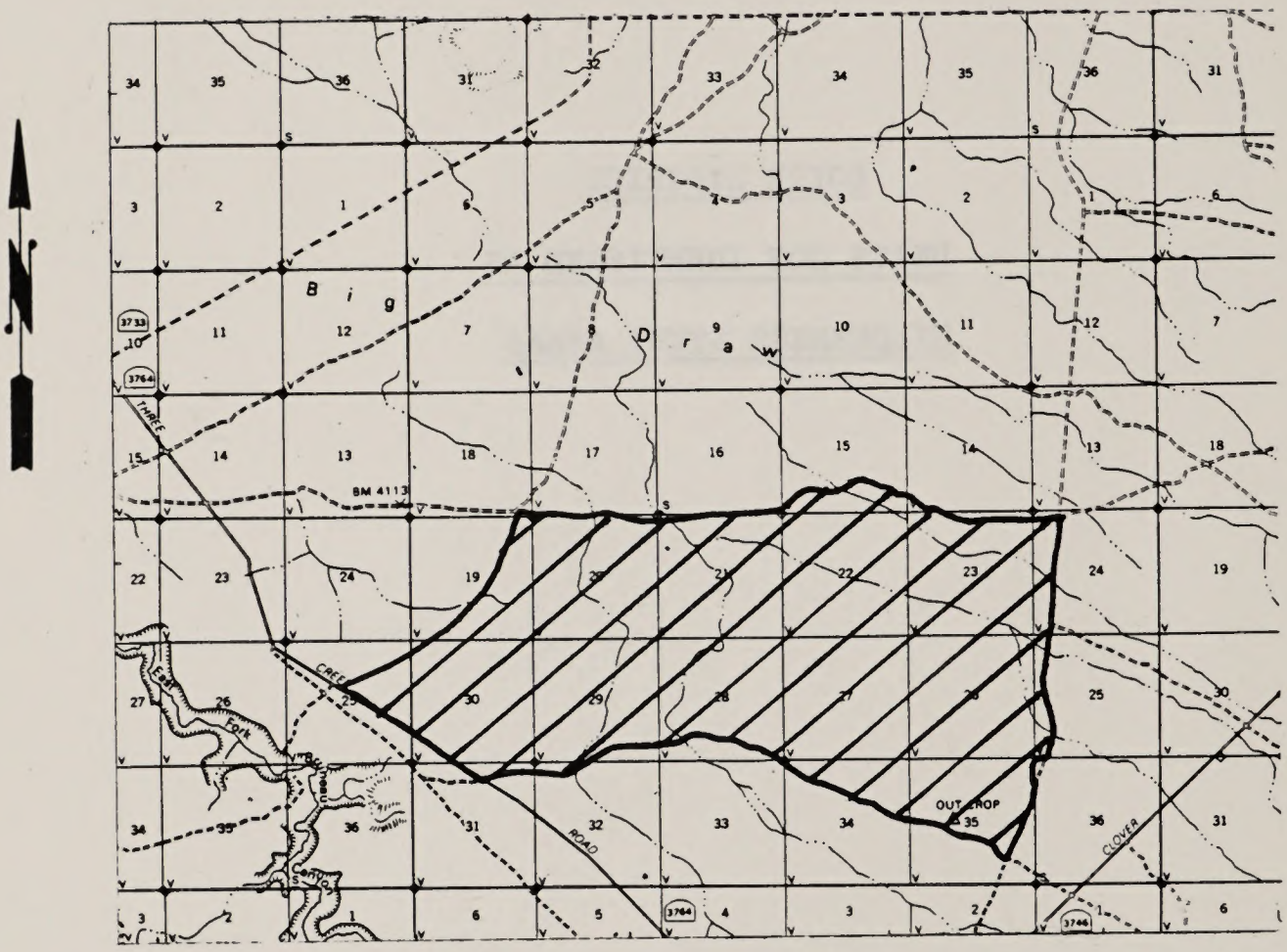
UNITS NOT IDENTIFIED AS

WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

11–17

OUTCROP

R. 9 E.



T. 10 S.

LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 6,420 acres of BLM land and is rectangular, two by six miles. It is located 33 miles southeast of Bruneau, east of Clover-Three Creek Road. The unit is essentially a flat plateau, with the highest point, Outcrop, in the extreme southeast, only 200 feet higher than the remainder of the unit. Vegetation is predominately northern desert shrub and grass species.

NATURALNESS:

Two ways, one each in the northeast and east portions of the unit, and a seeding project along the northern boundary are the only imprints of man. These imprints are judged not to be substantial due to their peripheral location and to the flat terrain, which renders the intrusions unnoticeable except at very close distances.

SOLITUDE:

Vegetative screening is poor due to the dominance of northern desert plant species. Topographic screening is poor due to the flat terrain. A few shallow ravines provide only localized, minimal screening. The off-unit presence of two heavily traveled, graded roads that are visible from most of the unit is considered substantial. The small size, lack of adequate topographic and vegetative screening, and presence of significant external influences render the opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreation opportunities include hiking, backpacking, camping, horseback riding, hunting, wildlife observation and photography. The unit's small size and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions render the recreation opportunities less than outstanding. Challenge associated with primitive recreation in the area is not considered significant.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments specifically addressed to Unit 11-17 agreed with the proposed decision that the unit should be dropped from further wilderness consideration, stating the unit lacks outstanding solitude and primitive recreation opportunities as well as naturalness.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

Contrary to public comment, the unit is natural in character because imprints of man are very few and widely scattered. Because of the flat topography and dispersity of imprints, contacts with imprints of man are infrequent and brief.

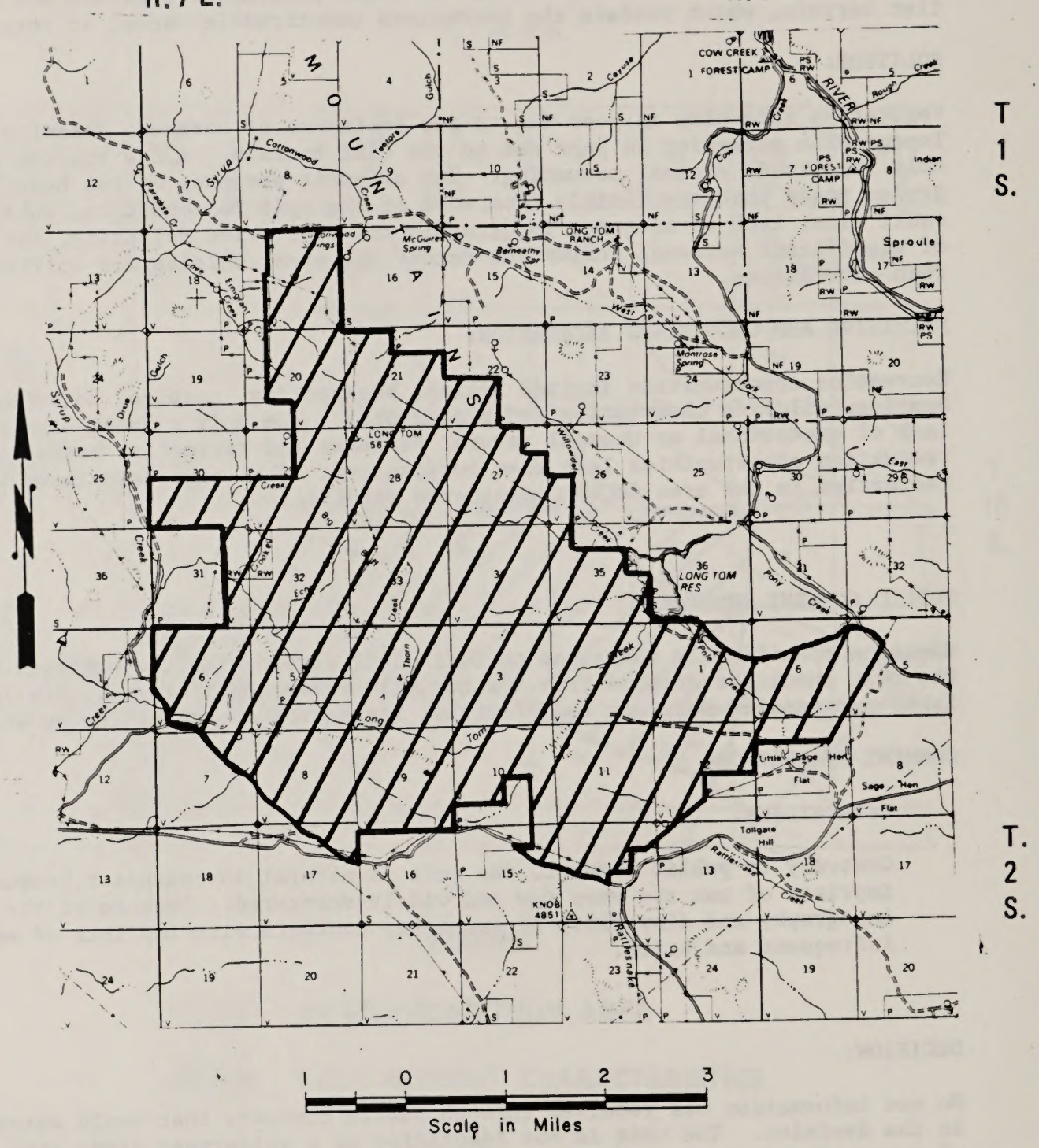
* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

14—19

LONG TOM CREEK



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 13,226 acres of BLM land in an irregular, triangular configuration seven miles long and 1-6 miles wide, with one private inholding. It is located 12 miles north of Mountain Home. The unit lies on a series of parallel ridges and valleys generally running in a northwest to southeast direction. The major topographic feature is Long Tom Creek in the southern portion. Vegetation in most of the unit is desert shrubs and grasses with a riparian zone along Long Tom Creek being a mixture of trees, brush and grasses.

NATURALNESS:

The southwest portion of the unit has one short dead-end road and two light ways. The low-standard road degenerates into a cow trail that leads to a private inholding. Lower elevations along the southwest periphery have been plowed and seeded for fire rehabilitation. The south-central periphery has one light way.

A way runs east-west into the core of the unit from Long Tom Reservoir on the eastern boundary. Two low-standard roads also penetrate well into the unit from the eastern boundary to reservoir developments. The western and northern portions have concentrations of fence lines which have been bladed or have ways paralleling them. Other intrusions in this area include a substantial way and developed spring. The intrusions in the western and northernmost portions of the unit are concentrated enough to impair the natural character of 4,900 acres. The remaining 8,326 acres appear to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprints of man substantially unnoticeable.

SOLITUDE:

The dominance of low shrub and grass vegetation throughout much of the unit offers minimal vegetative screening. Vegetative screening in the riparian zone of Long Tom Creek is considered good to excellent. The moderately rolling terrain in the easternmost portion of the unit and the area north of Long Tom Canyon offers a fair amount of topographic screening. Long Tom Creek and associated draws and ridges offer only fair to good topographic screening because of the relatively straight, open character of the canyon. Though there are areas within the canyon which offer small pockets of solitude, the small size of the natural area in combination with generally minimal vegetative screening and only moderate topographic screening, render the opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive recreational opportunities in the unit are primarily associated with Long Tom Creek, and include camping, backpacking, hiking, sightseeing, nature photography, horseback riding, fishing and hunting. The small size of the natural portion of the unit, and the lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreational attractions render the recreational opportunities less than outstanding. The recreational opportunities are considered to offer moderate physical and mental challenge.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments specifically addressed to Unit 14-19 agreed with the proposed decision to drop the unit from further wilderness consideration because 1) the naturalness of the unit was impaired by substantially noticeable roads and fences, 2) the unit lacked outstanding opportunities for solitude because little vegetative screening, and 3) there is no challenge to recreational opportunities.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

As stated in the proposed decision, portions of the unit are not natural because of substantially noticeable imprints of man. However, there are over 8,300 acres in the unit which are free of significant imprints of man.

Solitude:

Public comment agreed with the proposed decision that the unit lacked outstanding opportunities for solitude because of little vegetative screening. However, it should be noted that the lack of outstanding solitude was attributed to a combination of minimal vegetative screening, moderate topographic screening, topographic layout and relatively small size of the natural portion of the unit, and not just vegetative screening alone.

Primitive Recreation:

As stated in the proposed decision, physical challenge in the unit was considered moderate. However, the presence of physical challenge is not the determining factor in whether opportunities for primitive recreation are outstanding. The evaluation of recreational opportunities is based upon the relationship between unit's size, configuration and availability of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreational attractions. As stated in the proposed decision, opportunities for primitive recreation in the unit are not considered outstanding because of the small size of the natural area and the lack of exceptional or unusual natural features or recreation attractions.

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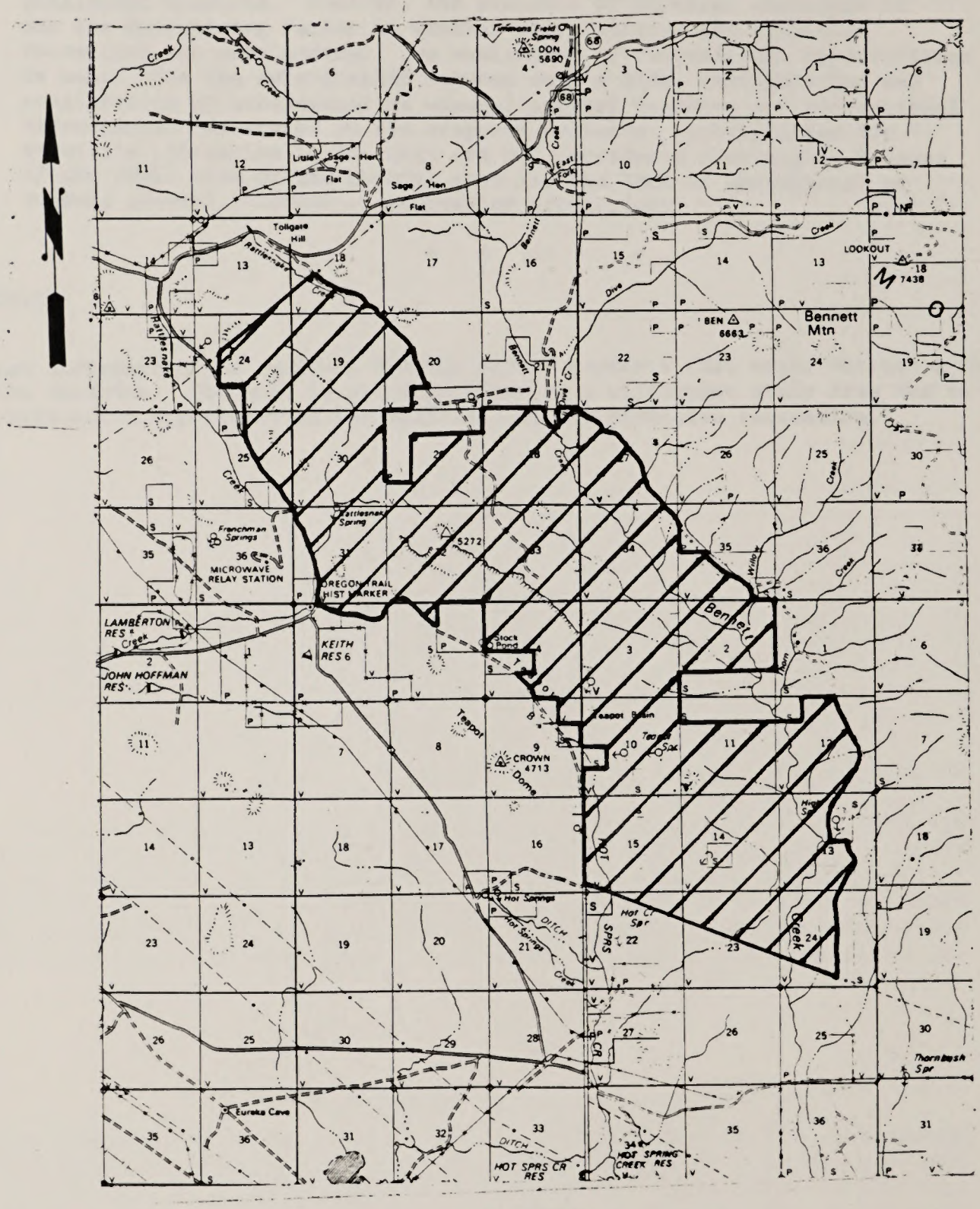
DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

14–21

BENNETT CREEK

R. 8 E.



T. 2 S.

T. 3 S.

LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

14-21 BENNETT CREEK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 11,162 acres of BLM land, in an irregular shape nine miles long and 3/4 mile to 2 1/2 miles wide, with two small state inholdings. It is located ten miles northeast of Mountain Home. The unit lies on a moderately eroded bench, cut by the steep-walled canyon of Bennett Creek along its eastern periphery. The bench breaks away sharply into a broad basin in the western periphery of the unit. Northern desert shrubs and grasses predominate with brush, willows and grasses in the canyon bottom of Bennett Creek.

NATURALNESS:

Intrusions are limited to a bladed fire line in the northwest corner of the unit, a north-south way penetrating to the core of the unit from the northeast boundary, and a light way penetrating the unit for 1/2 mile to a spring development from a southern boundary. None of the intrusions are substantially noticeable except at close distances. It would be difficult to walk the length of the unit without encountering the northern way. As a whole the unit appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature.

SOLITUDE:

The dominance of shrubs and grasses over much of the unit offers minimal vegetative screening. Vegetative screening offered by riparian vegetation in the bottom of Bennett Creek Canyon is considered fair to good. The moderately to deeply dissected terrain of the bench region and Bennett Creek canyon offer fair to good topographic screening. However the broad, open, gentle slopes of the western basin region offer minimal topographic screening. Though isolated areas of solitude are available because of topographic screening, the unit's small size and narrow, irregular configuration combined with minimal vegetative screening and generally moderate topographic screening render the opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive and unconfined recreational opportunities within the unit are camping, backpacking, hiking, nature photography, horseback riding and hunting. The unit's small size and poor configuration, and the lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreational attractions, render the recreational opportunities less than outstanding. There is a moderate amount of mental and physical challenge associated with the recreational opportunities.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that specifically addressed Unit 14-21 agreed with the proposed decision to drop the unit from further wilderness consideration because the area 1) lacks outstanding opportunities for solitude because of minimal or limited topographic and vegetative screening and 2) lacks outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation because of the unit's small size, poor configuration and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features or recreational attractions, and 3) contains imprints of man.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

Contrary to public comment, the unit appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the limited imprints of man substantially noticeable only at short distances.

Solitude:

Public comment agreed with the proposed decision that the unit lacks outstanding opportunities for solitude because of minimal or limited vegetative and topographic screening. However, it should be noted that the lack of outstanding solitude is based on the small size of the unit in relation to minimal screening and not just because of minimal screening.

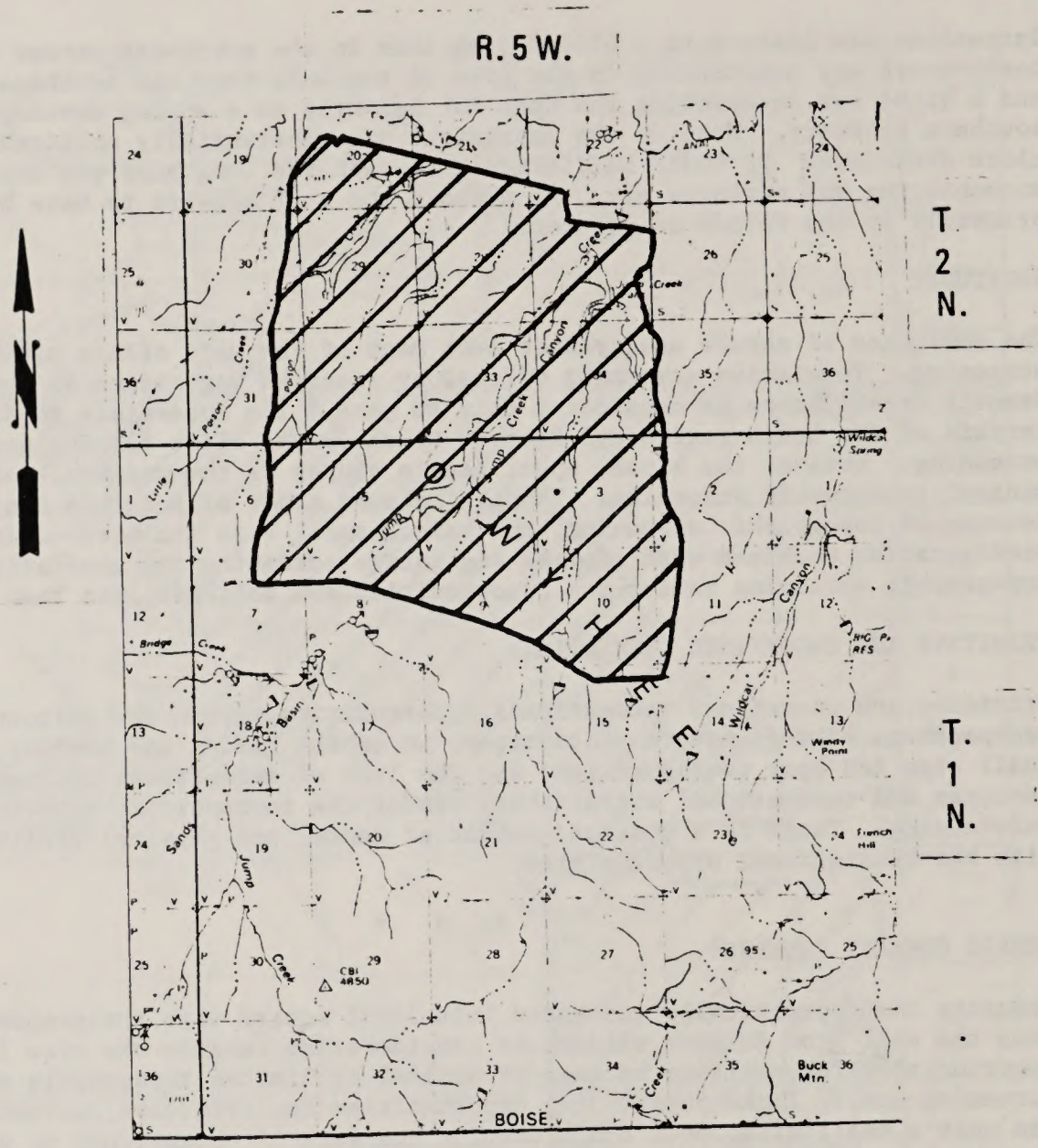
* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

16–2

JUMP CREEK



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

This unit was identified as a Wilderness Study Area on August 10, 1979 based on the results of the accelerated wilderness inventory conducted for the Agricultural Environmental Statement. Re-evaluation of this unit is necessary in order to assure consistency in the application of wilderness review criteria between the earlier and more recent decisions. Obvious inconsistencies currently exist, particularly with regard to the manner in which naturalness, external influences, configuration, and outstanding opportunities were assessed in the earlier inventory.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 8,301 acres of BLM land, in a somewhat square shape 3-4 miles on a side. It is located approximately ten miles southwest of Marsing. The dominant natural features are the canyons and watercourses of Jump Creek and Poison Creek. A significant portion of the unit lies on the surrounding open lava plain.

NATURALNESS:

In the original decision it was recognized that imprints of man were present, but the natural features were judged visually dominant over these imprints. However, this small unit contains about fourteen miles of ways and fire lines and five stock ponds. Reevaluation shows that these are distributed over the entire plateau portion of the unit, and topographic and vegetative screening is insufficient to shield them from view in the major portion of the plateau. The potential for frequent contact with these imprints is judged to be high. Cumulatively these imprints are reconsidered to be substantially noticeable. The canyon areas remain substantially natural in character, but they do not constitute 5,000 natural acres of public land.

SOLITUDE:

The broken topography associated with the canyons, the meandering course of the streams and significant riparian vegetation are still judged to offer excellent screening in the portion of the unit within the canyons. However, the small natural area and the narrow corridor of travel possible in this portion of the unit render the opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

As stated in the original intensive inventory narrative, recreation opportunities in the unit are associated primarily with the canyon areas. Despite the diversity and scenic quality of recreation attractions in the unit, its small natural area and narrow, confining corridor of travel render the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation less than outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The canyons, watercourses and associated ecosystems are of scenic, educational and scientific value.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that opposed the proposed decision to drop the unit gave the following specific reasons:

- All or most of the unit is natural; the boundaries could be modified to omit objectionable human caused impacts.
- The unit offers outstanding opportunities for solitude and the canyon and plateau offer outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation.
- There are outstanding scenic values on the plateau and in the canyon.
- The close proximity to major population centers enhances the outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation.
- Portions of unit should be made a wilderness study area even if less than 5,000 acres.

Comments in support of the proposed decision to drop the unit gave the following reasons:

- The unit is not natural because of 14 miles of ways or bladed fire lines and five stock ponds in a small area; the canyon is the only natural area.

- There are significant external influences from agricultural development immediately north of the unit.

- There is a road to stock ponds in the western portion of the unit.

- There are no outstanding opportunities for solitude on the plateau because of minimal vegetative screening and no topographic relief.

- There are no outstanding opportunities for solitude in the canyon because of frequent use by local teenager groups.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Size:

Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act permits the consideration of an area under 5,000 acres in size as wilderness provided it is "of sufficient size to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; . . ." The BLM wilderness inventory policy permits the consideration of areas under 5,000 acres provided that they can be managed in an unimpaired condition and there is strong public support for wilderness in the area. Public comments in the past have clearly shown that there is not strong public support for wilderness in this unit. Furthermore, current levels of use and abuse clearly indicate that this small area cannot realistically be managed in an unimpaired condition.

Naturalness:

As stated in the proposed decision, the naturalness of the plateau areas of the unit is seriously impaired by the frequency and severity of heavily bladed fire lines, ways, roads and stock ponds. Contact with these imprints would occur at intervals of 1/3 to 1 mile while crossing any portion of the plateau other than immediately along the rimrock of Jump Creek Canyon. An area of about 2,000 acres (3 1/2 miles long) within and about the rimrock of Jump Creek Canyon can be considered natural. However, the naturalness of some portions of the canyon in the vicinity of Jump Creek Falls has suffered seriously from past abuse and overuse.

Solitude:

The natural area of the unit is dominated by the narrow, meandering canyon of Jump Creek which runs for about 3 1/2 miles. Vegetation is dense within the riparian zone of the canyon and supplies excellent vegetative screening. However, the canyon creates a definite corridor effect which cannot be offset by the length of canyon. Therefore, the opportunities for solitude cannot be considered outstanding.

Primitive Recreation:

There is little argument that Jump Creek Canyon provides a scenic area within which a limited outdoor experience can be enjoyed. However, the small, short, and narrow natural canyon area cannot be defined as having outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of a natural area of sufficient size, and to the lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

16-9 REYNOLDS CREEK CANYON

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

This unit was identified as a Wilderness Study Area on August 10, 1979, based on the results of the accelerated wilderness inventory conducted for the Agricultural Environmental Statement. Re-evaluation of this unit is necessary in order to assure consistency in the application of wilderness review criteria between the earlier and more recent decisions. Obvious inconsistencies currently exist, particularly with regard to the manner in which naturalness, external influences, configuration, and outstanding opportunities were assessed in the earlier inventory.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 14,650 acres of BLM land in an irregular square shape, approximately six miles on a side. It is located approximately 16 miles southeast of Marsing. The dominant natural feature is the canyon of Reynolds Creek. The unit includes about 5½ miles of canyon, part of the upper drainage of Salmon Creek, and the dominant Wilson Peak ridge. Two dead-end roads extend into the body of this unit in the northwest. The state section 36 is not within the boundaries of the existing study area.

NATURALNESS:

In the original decision it was recognized that four developed springs, two fences, a mining pit and two systems of substantial ways exist in the unit, but these were judged to be substantially unnoticeable. Reconsideration of these imprints of man shows that the majority occur in an area of 4,000 acres in the northwest, the same portion of the unit as the dead-end roads and radio repeater facilities on Wilson Peak which are technically outside the unit. This concentration of imprints of man in a relatively small area within the unit is judged to be a substantial impact on naturalness. The remainder of the unit, 10,650 acres, is judged substantially natural in character.

SOLITUDE:

The unit was originally judged to contain sufficient topographic and vegetative screening to provide outstanding opportunities for solitude. While the topography and vegetation associated with the canyon are moderately effective in providing secluded spots for the visitor, size and external influences are now judged to play a more significant role in determining opportunities for solitude. Virtually the entire unit outside the canyon is subject to some external influence, including unobstructed views of boundary roads in portions of the unit sloping away from the canyon and views of the radio repeater and/or some portion of the system of substantial ways west of the canyon from most other points outside the canyon. Considering the cumulative impact of moderately significant external influences, the inner canyon is judged to be the only secluded area within the unit. However, the small size of this portion, the narrow, confining corridor of travel which tends to concentrate visitors and the short length and predominately linear nature of the canyon render opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreation opportunities associated with the canyon were originally judged outstanding. However, a reconsideration of the features that provide outstanding recreation shows that the short length of canyon; its linear nature except for the scenic, extreme lower section; and the effect of external influences outside the canyon limit the primitive and unconfined recreation experience possible within the unit. These opportunities are now considered significant but not outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The canyon, surrounding escarpments and associated ecosystems are of scenic, educational and scientific value.

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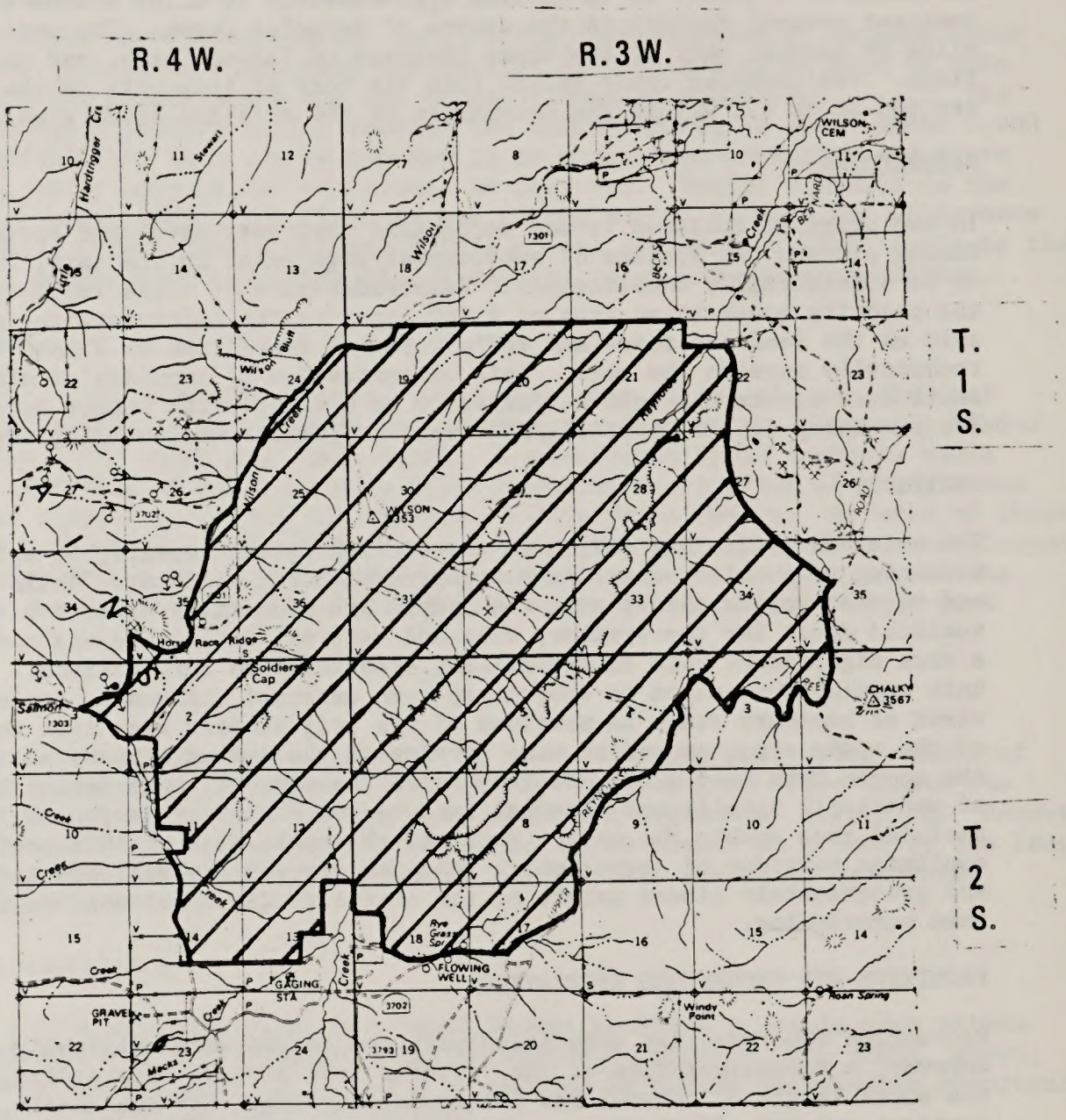
PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that supported the proposed decision to drop the unit gave the following specific reasons:

- The unit is not natural because imprints of man are substantially noticeable in the unit: imprints include developed springs, mining pits, roads, a corral, an irrigation ditch and a concrete diversion dam; other imprints in the area which lie outside the carefully manipulated boundary include additional concrete dams or weirs, a service road, a powerline, and a radio facility with several antennas and a concrete building on Wilson Peak.

16–9

REYNOLDS CREEK CANYON



- The unit lacks outstanding opportunities for solitude because of 1) minimal topographic and vegetative sceening, 2) the presence of significant external influences in the form of persistent views of land development in the adjacent Snake River Valley, 3) noise and visual disturbance from the county road on the west and south boundary, and 4) noise and smell from a large feed lot to the north of the unit.

- The unit lacks outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation because of minimal vegetative and topographic screening.

- The area does not qualify in accordance with the criteria. Several of the comments did recognize that Reynolds Creek Canyon had many outstanding features both visual and geological and that it probably comes close to meeting the general concept of a wilderness area.

Comments opposed to the proposed decision to drop the unit gave the following specific reasons:

- The area is very natural; Wilson Peak towers are not noticeable.

- Opportunities for solitude in the canyon are outstanding.

- The canyon has outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation; the close proximity of unit to urban centers increases opportunities.

- The area offers outstanding scenery and abundant flora varieties.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

As stated in the proposed decision, the western portion of the unit has a cherry stem road, major bulldozer cuts, spring developments, ways, a fence, and a radio tower atop Wilson Peak. Because of the concentration of imprints in this portion of the unit the imprints are considered substantially noticeable.

The radio tower facility lies about one mile inside the unit at the highest elevation in the unit. Though contributing to the impairment of naturalness in the western portion of the unit, this facility appears as nothing more than several very inconspicuous hair lines on the horizon over Wilson Peak when observed from higher elevations within the rest of the unit.

There are two major bulldozer cuts from past mining in the west central portion of the unit. These bladings, because of their severity and location on steep east-facing slopes are visible from much of the high ground in the eastern half of the unit. The only place they are not readily observable is within the lower elevations of the canyon or on the eastern pheriphery of the unit which overlooks the major eastern boundary road. A substantial way is also highly visible in the same region for similar reasons. The eastern portion also has several ways which have impacts on naturalness because of the sloping terrain on which they are located.

The lower elevations of Reynold's Creek canyon are relatively free of imprints of man except for some heavy localized livestock terracing on steep hillsides, a small mineral exploration area, and the cement weirs in the upper reaches of the canyon. Only in the lower elevations of the canyon and in the rock outcrop areas of the southwest portion of the unit can the imprints of man be considered substantially unnoticeable solely because of the screening of higher elevation impacts by steep topographic relief.

Solitude:

The evaluation of solitude is based upon the ability of a unit to allow a visitor to escape the sights and sounds of others in the unit as well as significant external influences. The minimal vegetative screening in this unit combined with the topographic layout of the unit creates a significant corridor effect in the canyon as well as prohibits visitors an escape from external influences.

The Reynolds Creek canyon is generally wide, straight and open with little riparian vegetation. These characteristics permit a visitor to see a long way in the canyon. This lack of screening within the canyon in combination with the relatively short length of the canyon is insufficient to mitigate the corridor effect which the canyon creates.

Because of the topographic layout of the unit (sloping generally downhill to the Snake River plain to the north and sharply downhill to major boundary roads on the east, west and south side) a visitor is constantly aware of widespread agricultural development or

road development in close proximity to the unit. Agricultural development is generally not considered a significant external influence, however, the topographic layout of the unit combined with the lack of any vegetative screening prohibits a visitor from escaping external sights anywhere in the unit except in the lower elevations of the canyon, thus the external influences are judged to significantly diminish the opportunities for solitude.

Because of the corridor effect of the canyon, the lack of effective topographic and vegetative screening, and significant external influences, the opportunities for solitude are not considered outstanding.

Primitive Recreation:

Opportunities for primitive recreation are largely dependent upon a unit's size and the presence of exceptional or unusual natural features or recreation attractions. Exceptional natural features are those which provide exceptional scenery, diversity of land form and/or reasonable mobility for a visitor, and would result in a strong recreation attraction to an area for one or more types of activities.

Most of the natural area of this unit is comprised of the six mile long Reynolds Creek canyon. This canyon is comprised of steep, open slopes on the west and moderately steep rock escarpments on the east. The mouth of the canyon is formed by a short 1/4 mile long, narrow sheer-walled canyon. The head of the canyon has some interesting granitic rock outcrop areas. These interesting areas are scenic, but because of their limited size they cannot be considered exceptional or unusual natural features. Likewise, the remainder of the canyon is scenic, but not unusually so to be considered an exceptional or unusual recreation attraction.

Because of steep topography, the canyon and surrounding escarpments confine the visitor to a limited area of the unit. Escape from the canyon will cause a visitor to immediately encounter the presence of man either as localized significant scars on the land or as significant external influences. A climb out of the canyon to the west will result in seeing major bladings or badly eroded vehicle tracks as well as widespread external influences. A climb to the east will place the visitor on an escarpment which often overlooks a major road and other external influences. Because of the confining affects of topography and widespread external influences, a sense of being confined in a small isolated natural area among man's developments is significant.

Therefore, the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation cannot be considered outstanding because of restricted mobility and a sense of confinement caused by external influences and topography, combined with a lack of exceptional recreational attractions.

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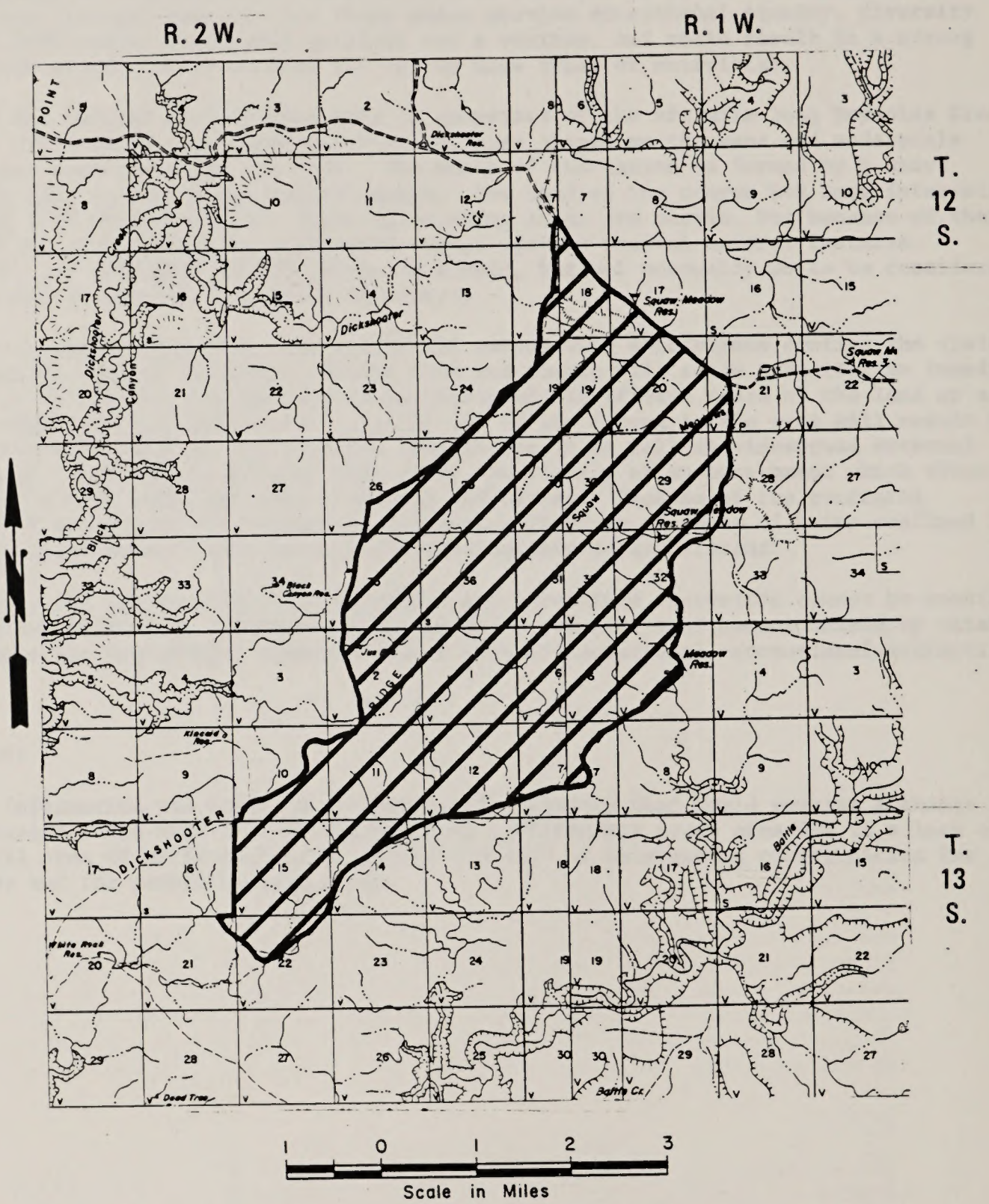
DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of a natural area of sufficient size, and to the lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.



16–49c

SQUAW MEADOWS



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

16-49c SQUAW MEADOWS

The April, 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 10,316 acres of BLM lands in an area eight miles long and four miles wide. It is located north of the Owyhee River about 33 miles west of Riddle. The unit lies on a flat to gently rolling table dominated by northern desert shrub species.

NATURALNESS:

Imprints of man are limited to a number of small stock ponds, mostly located about the periphery of the unit. The stock ponds are of limited localized impact and are sufficiently dispersed so as not to be substantially noticeable. The unit as a whole retains its natural character.

SOLITUDE:

The desert shrub vegetation of the unit offers minimal vegetative screening. The flat to gently rolling terrain offers poor topographic screening. The small size of the unit, combined with poor topographic and vegetative screening, does not afford outstanding opportunities for solitude.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreational opportunities in the unit include camping, backpacking and hunting. The unit's uniform character and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreational attractions render the recreation opportunities less than outstanding. There is no significant physical and mental challenge associated with the recreation opportunities.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit is reported to be bighorn sheep use area.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that specifically addressed unit 16-49c agreed with the proposed decision to drop the unit from further wilderness consideration because of a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation as well as a lack of naturalness.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

As stated in the proposed decision, the unit is natural because the imprints of man (stock ponds) are so widely scattered and mostly peripheral that they are substantially unnoticeable in the unit as a whole.

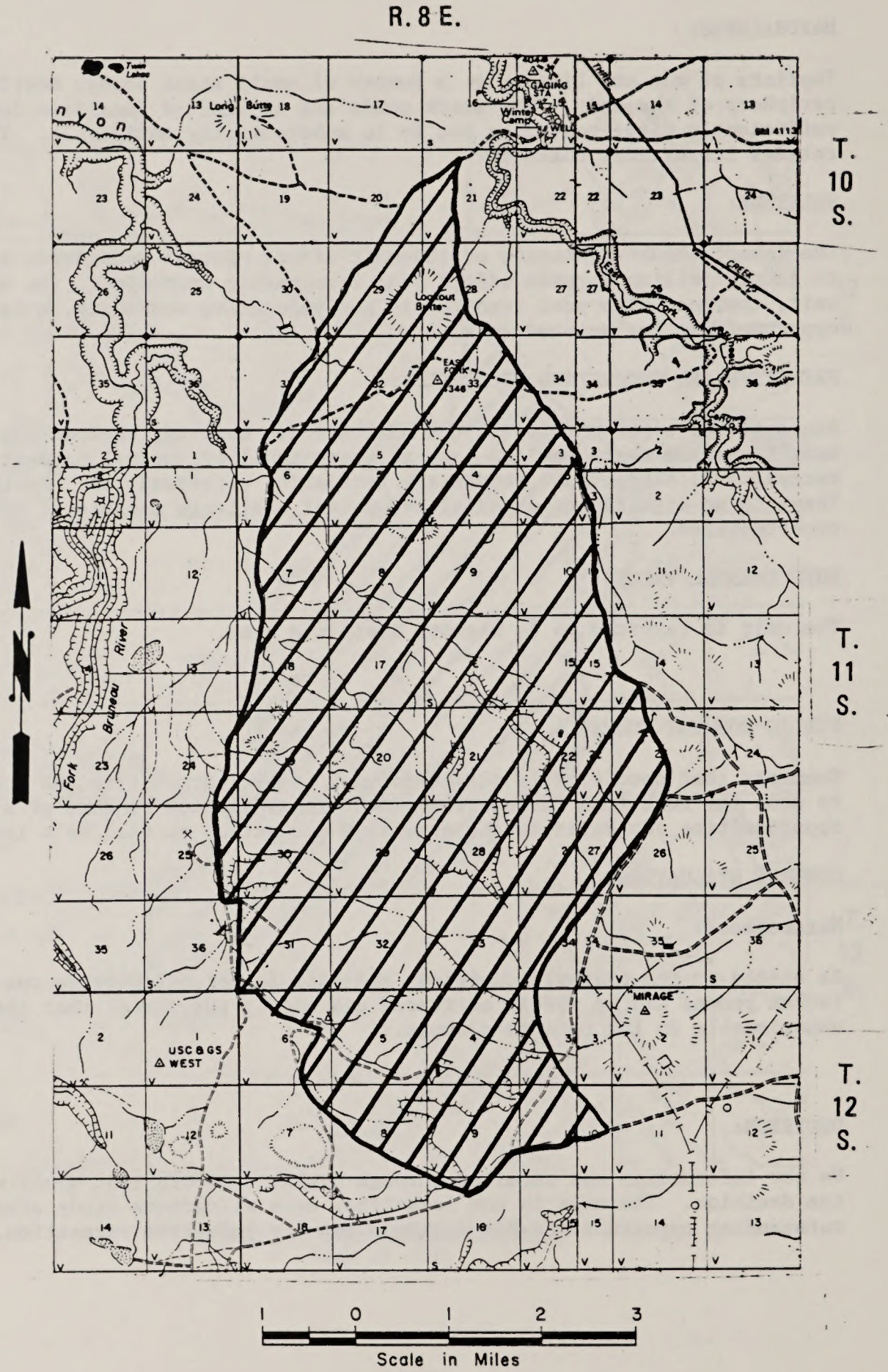
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DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

17–1a

LOOKOUT BUTTE


R. 8 E.
T. 10 S.
T. 11 S.
T. 12 S.
Lookout Butte
EAST FORK
GAGING STA
Winter Camp
WELL
MIRAGE
USC & GS
WEST
Fort Wainwright
Fort Wainwright
Fort Wainwright

17-1a LOOKOUT BUTTE

The April, 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 20,077 acres of BLM lands with one state inholding. The unit is an ellipse in shape with axes five miles and ten miles in length, and is located southwest of the Clover-Three Creek Road, 30 miles southeast of Bruneau. The unit lies on a rolling plateau west of the East Fork Bruneau River. From a high plateau area in the southeast, the unit breaks north and west into lower rolling hills in the central and western area. The northern half is a relatively level plain dominated by Lookout Butte. Drainages are typically gently sloping, broad and shallow. Northern desert plant communities dominate.

NATURALNESS:

A substantial way crosses the unit in the north; three light ways intrude the unit a short distance in the southwest. Two bladed fence lines intersect in the west central portion, one extending east-west across the unit, the other extending north from the southern boundary to its intersection with the first fence line. These bladed lines are noticeable at variable distances due to the rolling terrain and poor vegetative screening. While they do provide evidence of man, they affect only narrow corridors in portions of the unit. The unit as a whole retains its natural character.

SOLITUDE:

Low desert shrubs and grasses dominant in the unit provide little vegetative screening. Poor to moderate topographic screening prevails in the area. While visitors may reasonably expect to find pockets of solitude due chiefly to the unit's size, opportunities are not considered outstanding due to lack of relief and minimal vegetative screening. The bladed fence lines crossing the unit further restrict the opportunities for solitude by limiting the potential for experiencing vast, unobstructed open spaces.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

While the unit offers recreation opportunities such as hiking, camping, horseback riding, hunting, wildlife viewing and photography, the lack of unusual or exceptional natural features and recreation attractions renders the opportunities for primitive recreation less than outstanding. Challenge associated with primitive recreation in the area is not considered outstanding.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that supported the proposed decision to drop the unit stated that the unit did not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or for primitive recreation, and also that the unit was not natural. Comments opposed to dropping the unit stated that the BLM had improperly evaluated the opportunity for solitude by depending too heavily upon the influence of topographic and vegetative screening.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

The conclusion remains that the unit is natural because the imprints of man are so widely scattered that they are not substantially noticeable in the unit as a whole. It is recognized that localized impacts from bladed fence lines are severe in some locations because of rolling terrain and minimal vegetative cover for screening soil disturbances.

Solitude:

The BLM does not rely solely upon topographic and vegetative screening to evaluate solitude. Decisions are made by evaluating the relationship of topographic and vegetative screening to the overall size of a unit.

It is generally recognized that the lack of topography and tall vegetation does limit the opportunity to achieve solitude (to avoid the sights and sounds of others in a unit as well as external influences) unless the area involved is relatively large. Low vegetation on flat to relatively flat terrain can provide excellent screening if given a sufficiently large enough area to allow other visitors or external influences (such as vehicle traffic on boundary roads) to blend or disappear into the landscape. Low vegetation on flat terrain does give a sense of remoteness or vastness to an area, adding to the solitude experience.

The determining factor as to whether a solitude experience can be considered outstanding is the opportunity of visitors to escape the sights and sounds of others in a unit of a given size as well as vehicle traffic along boundary roads or other external influences. If a unit is not large enough to allow a realistic amount of visitors to disperse and achieve the blending affect of flat, open, sagebrush areas, the opportunities for solitude cannot be considered outstanding. Unit 17-1a is not considered large enough to provide sufficient dispersion and landscape blending of a realistic amount of visitor use. In addition, the opportunity to experience vast, unobstructed open space is greatly diminished by bladed fence line systems cutting the unit into three parcels. Therefore, opportunities for solitude are not considered outstanding.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

17-1b EAST FORK BRUNEAU RIVER

The April, 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 10,178 acres of BLM land roughly in a square four miles on a side. It is located south of the Clover-Three Creek Road near Clover Crossing, 30 miles southeast of Bruneau. The unit is a flat plateau cut by the East Fork Bruneau River. About six river miles are included in the unit. The canyon is relatively broad and open, with talus slopes, a few areas of rimrock, and little stream gradient. Northern desert shrub species dominate, with some riparian shrub species in the stream bottom.

NATURALNESS:

A substantial way extends from the south to the canyon rim in the central portion of the unit. A short fence line extends to the rim in the southeast corner. While the way is relatively substantial, the major portion of the unit appears natural in character.

SOLITUDE:

Northern desert shrubs dominate most of the unit and consequently overall vegetative screening is poor. Riparian growth in the canyon provides a moderate amount of screening. The canyon, relatively broad, open and shallow, provides only moderate topographic screening. There is little topographic relief in the unit outside the canyon. Overall topographic screening is considered poor to moderate. The small size of the unit, in combination with poor to moderate vegetative and topographic screening, renders the opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreation opportunities include hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, camping, hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography. However, the portion of the East Fork Bruneau River within the unit is not considered an outstanding recreation attraction. The unit's small size and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions render the recreation opportunities less than outstanding. Challenge associated with primitive recreation in the area is not considered significant.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that supported the proposed decision to drop the unit agreed that the unit did not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or for primitive recreation, but also felt the unit was not natural. Comments opposed to dropping the unit stated that the BLM had improperly evaluated the opportunity for solitude by depending too heavily upon the influence of topographic and vegetative screening.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

The conclusion remains that the unit is natural because the imprints of man are so widely scattered that they are not substantially noticeable in the unit as a whole.

Solitude:

The BLM does not rely solely upon topographic and vegetative screening to evaluate solitude. Decisions are made by evaluating the relationship of topographic and vegetative screening to the overall size of a unit.

It is generally recognized that the lack of topography and tall vegetation does limit the opportunity to achieve solitude (to avoid the sights and sounds of others in a unit as well as external influences) unless the area involved is relatively large. Low vegetation on flat to relatively flat terrain can provide excellent screening if given a sufficiently large enough area to allow other visitors or external influences (such as vehicle traffic on boundary roads) to blend or disappear into the landscape. Low vegetation on flat terrain does give a sense of remoteness or vastness to an area, adding to the solitude experience.

The determining factor as to whether a solitude experience can be considered outstanding is the opportunity of visitors to escape the sights and sounds of others in a unit of a given size as well as vehicle traffic along boundary roads or other external influences. If a unit is not large enough to allow a realistic amount of visitors to disperse and achieve the blending affect of flat, open, sagebrush areas, the opportunities for solitude cannot be considered outstanding. Unit 17-1b is not considered large enough to provide sufficient dispersion and landscape blending of a realistic amount of visitor use. Therefore, opportunities for solitude are not considered outstanding.

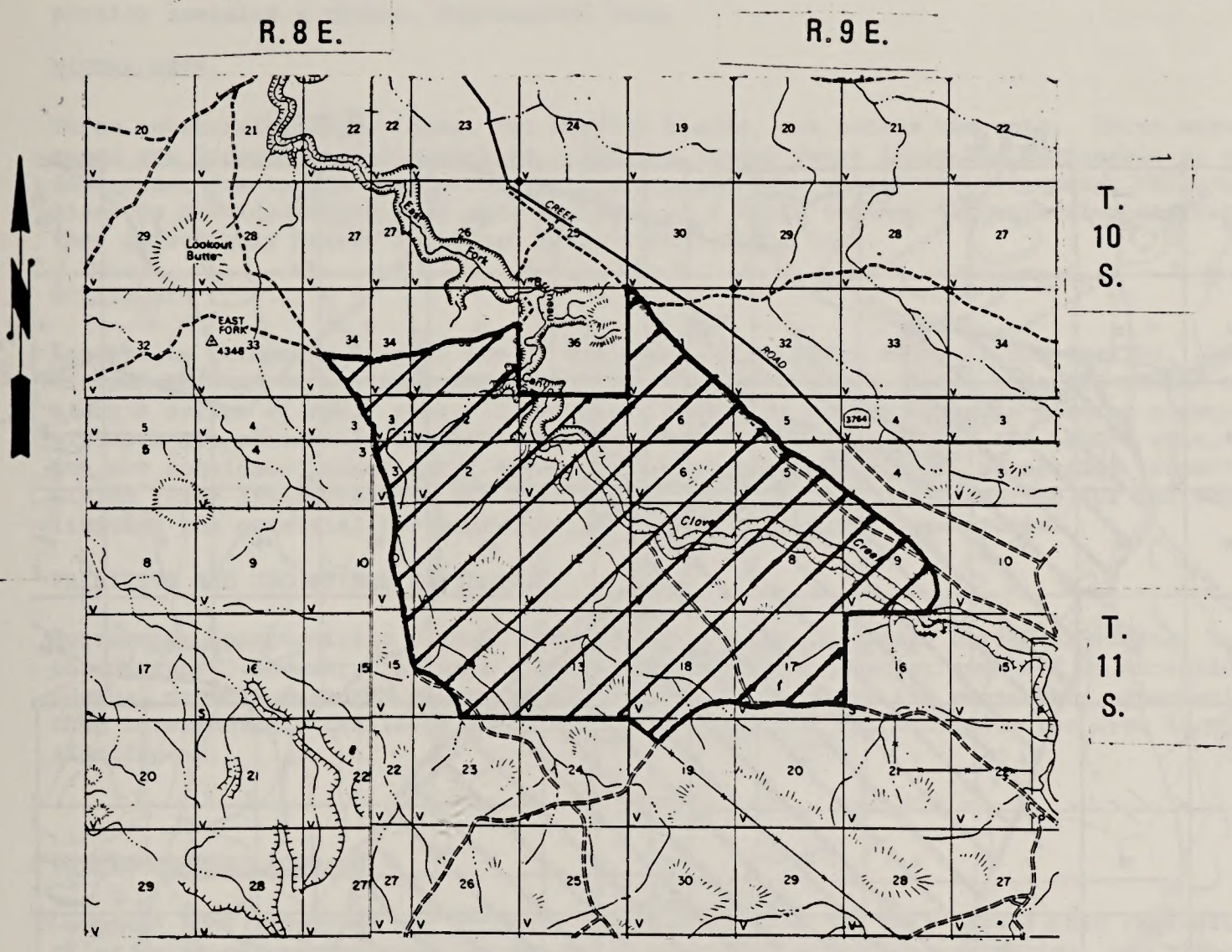
* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study are due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

17–1b

EAST FORK BRUNEAU RIVER



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

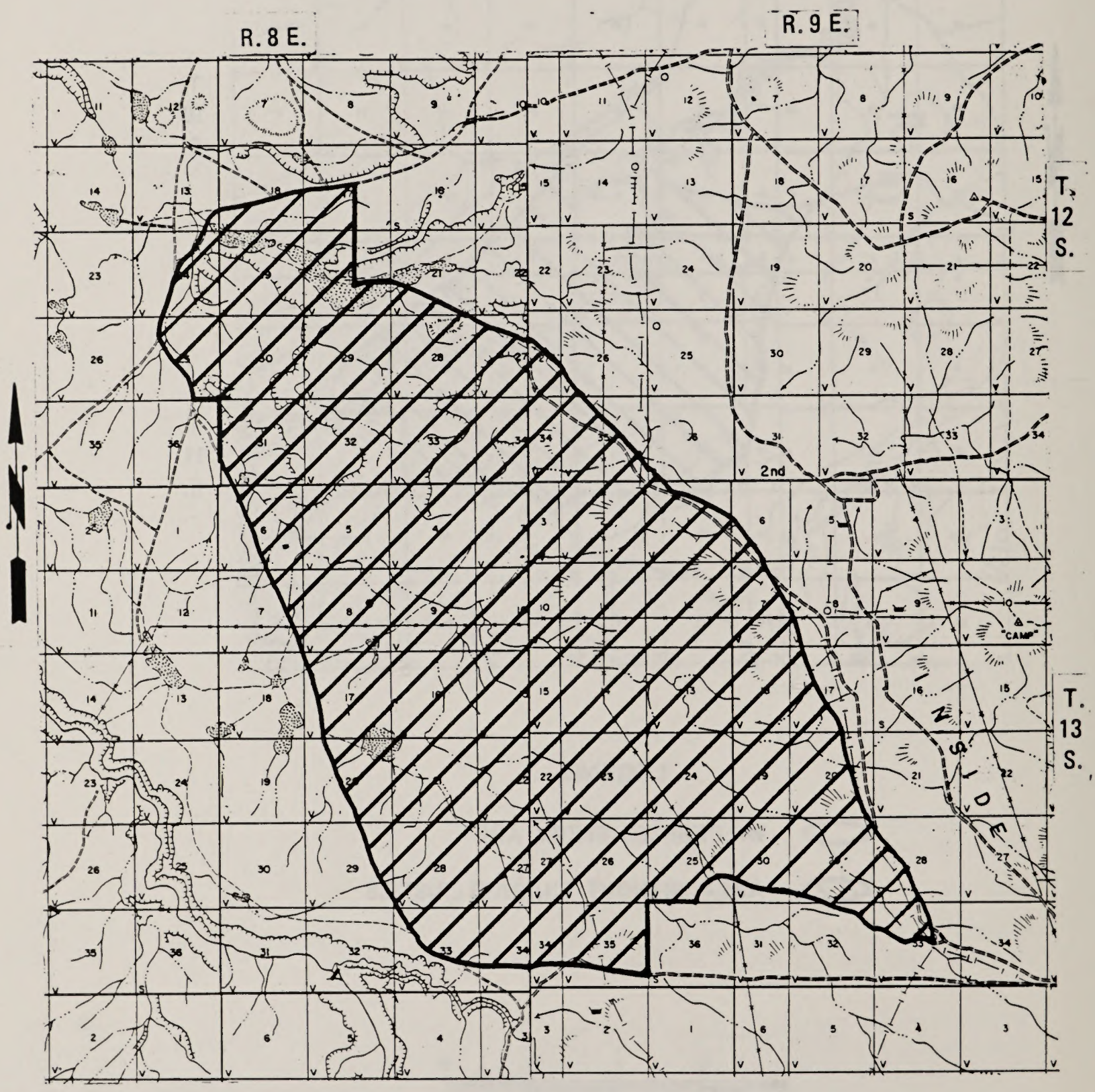
AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

17–6

DRY LAKES



1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

17-6 DRY LAKES

The April, 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 26,208 acres of BLM land with one state inholding. The unit is irregularly rectangular, five by seven miles, and is located west of the Clover-Three Creek Road 42 miles southeast of Bruneau. A relatively level to rolling plateau, lightly dissected and draining northwest, dominates the major portion of the unit. The northern portion contains a series of meandering rims. Northern desert plant species predominate. The northeast portion contains a recent, regenerated burn.

NATURALNESS:

Three substantial fence lines, two heavily bladed, cut across the unit. Three water developments are located on the periphery. The two bladed fence lines are noticeable at variable distances, due to the gently rolling terrain and poor vegetative screening. While the fence lines do provide evidence of man, the unit as a whole retains its natural character since they affect only narrow corridors in portions of the area.

SOLITUDE:

Vegetative screening is poor due to dominance of northern desert plant species. Relief is minimal throughout the unit except in the northern portion, where moderate relief exists along a series of small rims. Topographic screening on the whole is poor to moderate. While visitors may reasonably expect to find pockets of solitude due to the unit's size, opportunities are not considered outstanding due to lack of relief and minimal vegetative screening. The bladed fence lines crossing the unit further restrict the opportunities for solitude by limiting the potential for experiencing vast, unobstructed open spaces.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreation opportunities include hiking, backpacking, camping, horseback riding, hunting and photography. However, the unit's relatively uniform character and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions render the recreation opportunities less than outstanding. Challenge associated with primitive recreation in the area is not considered significant.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that supported the proposed decision to drop the unit agreed that the unit did not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or for primitive recreation, but also felt the unit was not natural. Specific reasons given for considering the unit unnatural were the presence of reseedings, fences and water improvements as well as external influences of boundary roads. Comments opposed to dropping the unit felt that the BLM had improperly evaluated the opportunity for solitude by depending too heavily upon the influence of topographic and vegetative screening.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

The conclusion remains that the unit is natural because the imprints of man are so widely scattered that they are not substantially noticeable in the unit as a whole. It is recognized that localized impacts from bladed fence lines are severe in some locations because of rolling terrain and minimal vegetative cover for screening soil disturbances.

Solitude:

The BLM does not rely solely upon topographic and vegetative screening to evaluate solitude. Decisions are made by evaluating the relationship of topographic and vegetative screening to the overall size of a unit.

It is generally recognized that the lack of topography and tall vegetation does limit the opportunity to achieve solitude (to avoid the sights and sounds of others in a unit as well as external influences) unless the area involved is relatively large. Low vegetation on flat to relatively flat terrain can provide excellent screening if given a sufficiently large enough area to allow other visitors or external influences (such as vehicle traffic on boundary roads) to blend or disappear into the landscape. Low vegetation on flat terrain does give a sense of remoteness or vastness to an area, adding to the solitude experience.

The determining factor as to whether this solitude experience can be considered outstanding is the opportunity of visitors to escape the sights and sounds of others in a unit of a given size as well as vehicle traffic along boundary roads or other external influences. If a unit is not large enough to allow a realistic amount of visitors to disperse and achieve the blending effect of flat, open, sagebrush areas, the opportunities for solitude cannot be considered outstanding. Unit 17-6 is not considered large enough to provide sufficient dispersion and landscape blending of a realistic amount of visitor use. In addition, the opportunity to experience vast, unobstructed open space is greatly diminished by bladed fence line systems cutting the unit into three parcels. Therefore, opportunities for solitude are not considered outstanding.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

17-7 CLOVER CROSSING

The April, 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 6,314 acres of BLM land. The unit is irregular in shape, 1 1/4 - 3 miles wide and three miles long. It is located 40 miles southeast of Bruneau, along the east side of the Clover-Three Creek Road, south of Clover Crossing. The unit consists of a level plateau cut by the canyon of the East Fork of the Bruneau River. About five river miles are contained in the unit. The canyon is relatively broad and open, with talus slopes, a few areas of rimrock and little stream gradient. The eastern half of the unit is dominated by northern desert shrubs, while the western half is occupied by seeded grasses from a fire rehabilitation project.

NATURALNESS:

Three light ways, a water development and a fence are concentrated in the southern portion of the unit. A bladed fire line parallels the northeastern boundary road for a short distance. Most of the unit appears to have been affected primarily by natural processes. Only in the extreme south are human imprints considered substantially noticeable because of their concentration.

SOLITUDE:

Northern desert shrubs dominate most of the unit; consequently overall vegetative screening is poor. Riparian growth in the canyon provides a moderate amount of screening. The canyon, relatively broad, open and shallow, provides only moderate topographic screening. There is little relief outside the canyon. Overall topographic screening is considered poor to moderate. The small size of the unit, in combination with poor to moderate vegetative and topographic screening, renders the opportunity for solitude less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreation opportunities include hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, camping, hunting, wildlife observation and photography. However, the portion of the East Fork Bruneau River within the unit is not considered a significant recreation attraction. The unit's small size and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions render the recreation opportunities less than outstanding. Challenge associated with primitive recreation in the area is not considered significant.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that specifically addressed Unit 17-7 and supported the proposed decision to drop the unit agreed that the unit did not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or for primitive recreation, but also felt the unit was not natural. A comment opposed to dropping the unit felt that the BLM had improperly evaluated the opportunity for solitude by depending too heavily upon the influence of topographic and vegetative screening.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

The conclusion remains that the unit is natural because the imprints of man are so widely scattered that they are not substantially noticeable in the unit as a whole.

Solitude:

The BLM does not rely solely upon topographic and vegetative screening to evaluate solitude. Decisions are made by evaluating the relationship of topographic and vegetative screening to the overall size of a unit.

It is generally recognized that the lack of topography and tall vegetation does limit the opportunity to achieve solitude (to avoid the sights and sounds of others in a unit as well as external influences) unless the area involved is relatively large. Low vegetation on flat to relatively flat terrain can provide excellent screening if given a sufficiently large enough area to allow other visitors or external influences (such as vehicle traffic on boundary roads) to blend or disappear into the landscape. Low vegetation on flat terrain does give a sense of remoteness or vastness to an area, adding to the solitude experience.

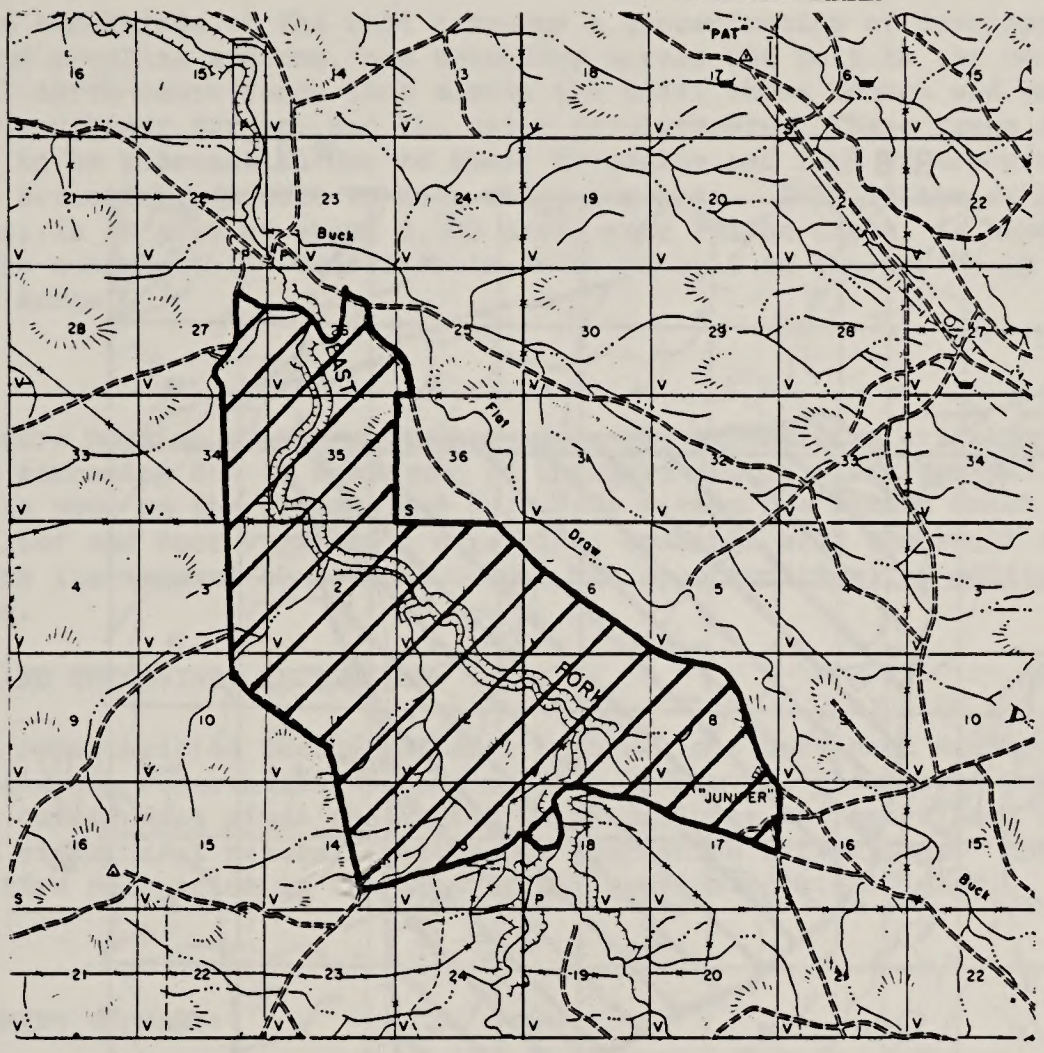
The determining factor as to whether a solitude experience can be considered outstanding is the opportunity of visitors to escape the sights and sounds of others in a unit of a given size as well as vehicle traffic along boundary roads or other external influences. If a unit is not large enough to allow a realistic amount of visitors to disperse and achieve the blending effect of flat, open, sagebrush areas, the opportunities for solitude cannot be considered outstanding. Unit 17-7 is not considered large enough nor of good enough configuration to provide sufficient dispersion and landscape blending of a realistic amount of visitor use as well as blending of external influences, particularly considering that the unit is generally bowled toward its center allowing a greater field of vision across the unit. Traffic along the Three Creek-Clover Crossing Road is readily visible from most of the plateau area of the unit. This road is frequently traveled, therefore, opportunities for solitude are not considered outstanding.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

CLOVER CROSSING



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

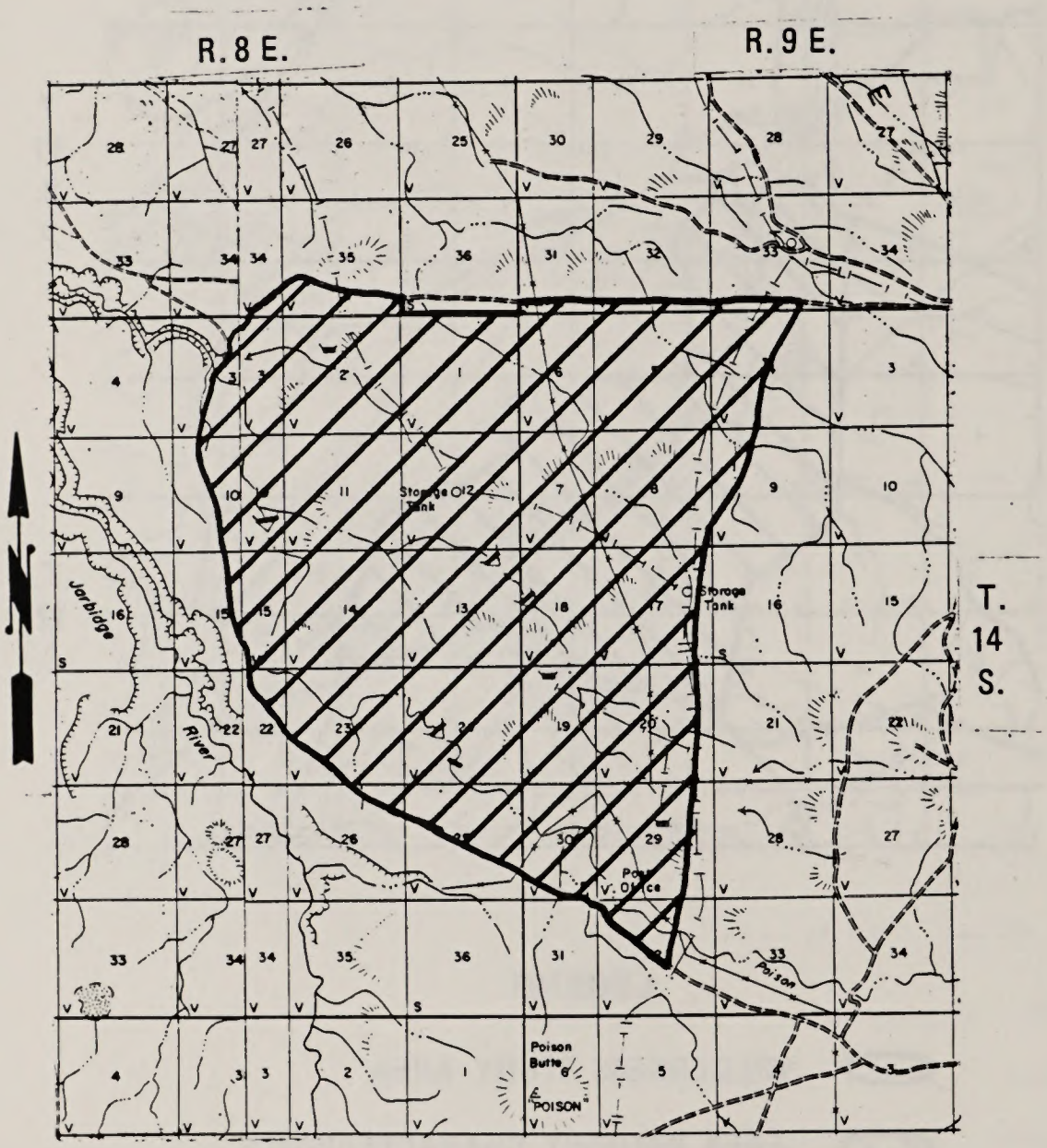
AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

17–12

POISON CREEK



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

17-12 POISON CREEK

The April, 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 13,532 acres of BLM land. The unit is roughly square, four miles on a side, and is located west of the Clover-Three Creek Road 48 miles southeast of Bruneau. The unit is a relatively flat plateau cut on its western edge by Poison Creek. The creek canyon is relatively broad, open and not deeply incised. In a few locations rock faces extend from the plateau to the canyon bottom. The unit is dominated by northern desert plant species.

NATURALNESS:

The eastern two-thirds of the unit contains a concentration of developments, including two road and pipeline systems, one extending across the unit in the northeast; a substantial north-south fence line across the unit; three fences and an associated way in the southeast corner; and ten water developments. These range developments are judged to be substantial due to their frequency and lack of topographic and vegetative screening adequate to hide these imprints. Only in the extreme west of the unit, in an area of about 6,000 acres near Poison Creek, is human influence judged to be substantially unnoticeable. One subunit in the northeast contains less than 5,000 acres.

SOLITUDE:

The 6,000 acre portion of the unit that meets the naturalness criteria offers minimal vegetative screening due to dominance of northern desert plant species. Topographic screening is poor on the plateau and only fair within the Poison Creek drainage. The lack of relief and poor vegetative screening, combined with the small size of the unit that retains its natural character, render the opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreation opportunities include hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, camping, hunting, wildlife observation and photography. However, these opportunities are not considered outstanding since the Poison Creek drainage and associated plateau are not considered significant natural features or recreation attractions. Challenge associated with primitive recreation in the area is not considered significant.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that specifically addressed unit 17-12 and supported the proposed decision to drop the unit agreed that the unit did not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or for primitive recreation, but also felt the unit was not natural. Specific reasons given for considering the area unnatural including the existence of reseedings, fences and water developments as well as external influences from boundary roads. Comments opposed to dropping the unit felt that the BLM had improperly evaluated the opportunity for solitude by depending too heavily upon the influence of topographic and vegetative screening.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

The conclusion remains that the western portion of the unit is natural because the imprints of man are so widely scattered that they are not substantially noticeable in the area as a whole. It is also recognized that the imprints of man in the eastern half of the unit are substantially noticeable because of their concentration.

Solitude:

The BLM does not rely solely upon topographic and vegetative screening to evaluate solitude. Decisions are made by evaluating the relationship of topographic and vegetative screening to the overall size of a unit.

It is generally recognized that the lack of topography and tall vegetation does limit the opportunity to achieve solitude (to avoid the sights and sounds of others in a unit as well as external influences) unless the area involved is relatively large. Low vegetation on flat to relatively flat terrain can provide excellent screening if given a sufficiently large enough area to allow other visitors or external influences (such as vehicle traffic on boundary roads) to blend or disappear into the landscape. Low vegetation on flat terrain does give a sense of remoteness or vastness to an area, adding to the solitude experience.

The determining factor as to whether a solitude experience can be considered outstanding is the opportunity of visitors to escape the sights and sounds of others in a unit of a given size as well as vehicle traffic along boundary roads or other external influences. If a unit is not large enough to allow a realistic amount of visitors to disperse and achieve the blending effect of flat, open, sagebrush areas, the opportunities for solitude cannot be considered outstanding. The natural portion (western portion) of unit 17-12 is not considered large enough to provide sufficient dispersion and landscape blending of a realistic amount of visitor use. Therefore, the opportunities for solitude are not considered outstanding.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness in portions of the unit, and a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

The April, 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 7,472 acres of BLM land with a patchwork of private ownership in the southern portion along the Wildhorse River. Configuration is irregular; the unit varies from 1/2 - 2 1/2 miles wide and is seven miles long. It is located along the east side of the Snake River just downstream from Brownlee Dam. The unit is comprised of a high ridge and steep slopes between the Snake River at Brownlee and the Wildhorse River. About three miles of the Wildhorse River are within the unit. The riparian zone is dominated by cottonwood and associated shrub species; the ridge and slopes contain desert shrub species, mountain mahogany and ninebark thickets and pockets and stringers of fir and pine.

NATURALNESS:

The unit is essentially free of human imprints. A road associated with the power line that forms part of the western boundary isolates about 200 acres on the northwestern edge.

SOLITUDE:

Density of vegetation is extremely variable. Within the pockets of fir and pine, screening is generally good. Most of the ridgetop and open slopes offer only minimal vegetative screening. Topographic relief provides good screening except on the broad ridgetop. Steep, broken slopes are characteristic. However, the power line and Oxbow Reservoir are significant external influences that are clearly visible from the ridgetop and from large areas on the upper, open slopes. Pockets within the unit offer opportunities for solitude due to the broken nature of the slopes, but the combination of small size, poor configuration, significant external influences and only poor to moderate screening render them less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

While the unit may offer somewhat challenging cross country travel over its rugged terrain and a moderately good recreation experience on the lower Wildhorse River, these natural features are not considered exceptional or unusual enough to provide outstanding primitive recreation, considering the unit's small size and the short section of river it contains. The extremely poor configuration of the unit confines the recreationist to an irregular corridor of use and prevents an outstanding primitive recreation experience.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains significant scenic and ecological values. Ecological values include important sharp-tail grouse habitat, reported elk winter range, large populations of black bear and critical mule deer winter range.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that specifically addressed unit 18-1 and supported the proposed decision to drop the unit felt that the area lacks outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation because of minimal vegetative screening, and that the area contained imprints of man on the unit's naturalness. Comments requesting that the area be identified as a WSA indicated that (1) despite minimal vegetative screening the unit offered outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and (2) that wildlife values warranted the area's protection as a natural area.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

Contrary to public comment, the unit is essentially free of human imprints, with the exception of the area directly adjacent to the powerline on the northwest edge.

Solitude:

The proposed decision states that the unit's lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude was based upon more than the limited amount of vegetative screening in the unit. The primary reason the unit was felt to lack outstanding solitude was that the unit's configuration and topographic layout made it difficult for one to escape significant external influences in large areas of the unit where vegetative screening was minimal. Small pockets of solitude are recognized to exist in the unit because of steep relief and small stands of timber, but these areas are not large enough to provide adequate escape from external influences.

Primitive Recreation:

Though it is recognized in the proposed decision that the unit lacks outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation, the evaluation of recreation opportunities is not based upon the presence of vegetative screening. The opportunity to achieve a quality primitive and unconfined recreation experience is dependent upon the availablility of exceptional or unusual natural features or recreation attractions in combination with the size and configuration of a unit. The configuration of this unit severely restricts or confines the mobility of a visitor to narrow corridors of use. This confinement in combination with no unusual or exceptional natural features renders the opportunities for primitive recreation less than outstanding.

Supplemental Values:

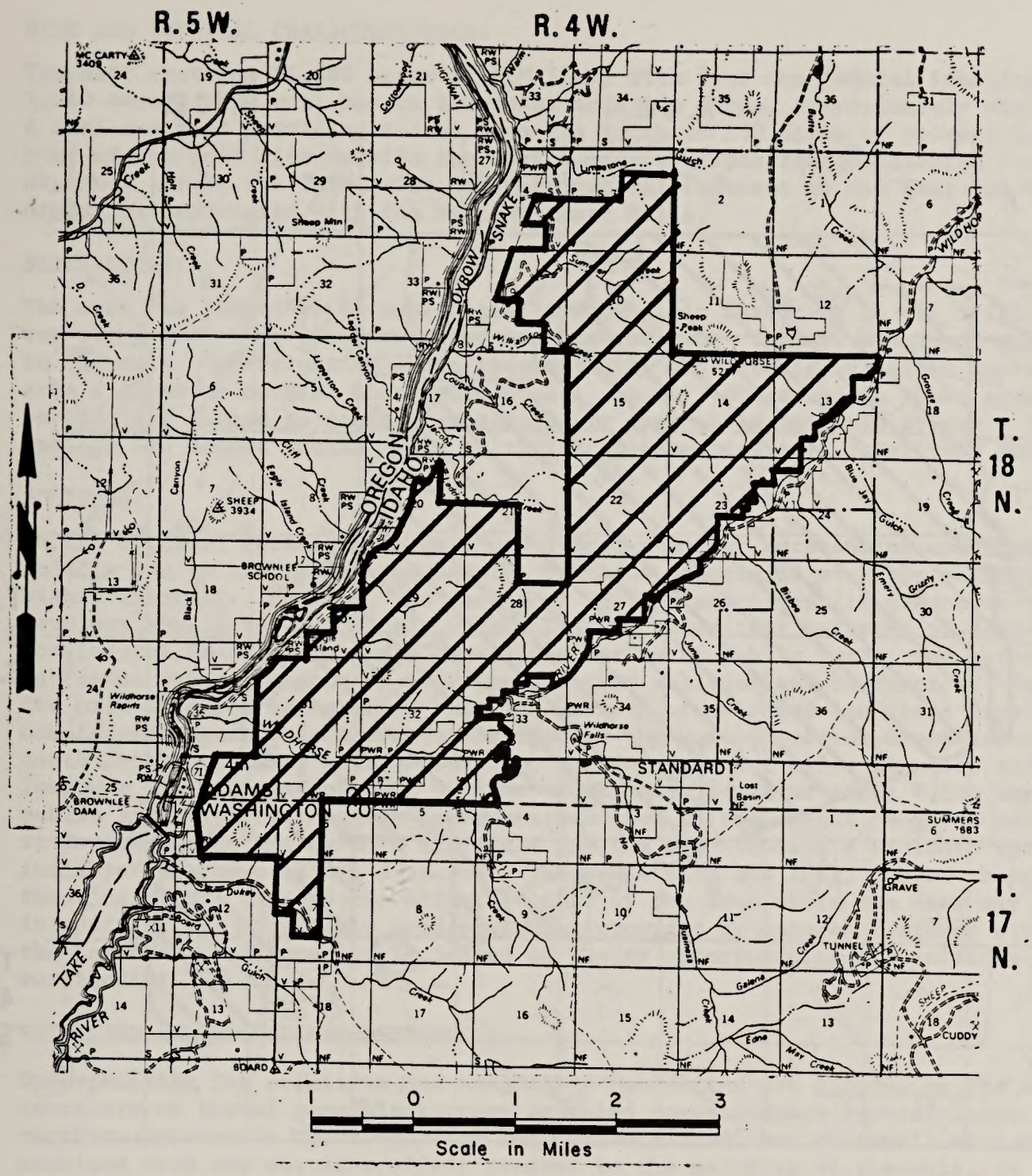
As stated in the proposed decision, it is recognized that the area possesses important wildlife values. However, identification of an area is not based entirely on the supplemental values; other characteristics must also be present.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

18–1
WILD HORSE

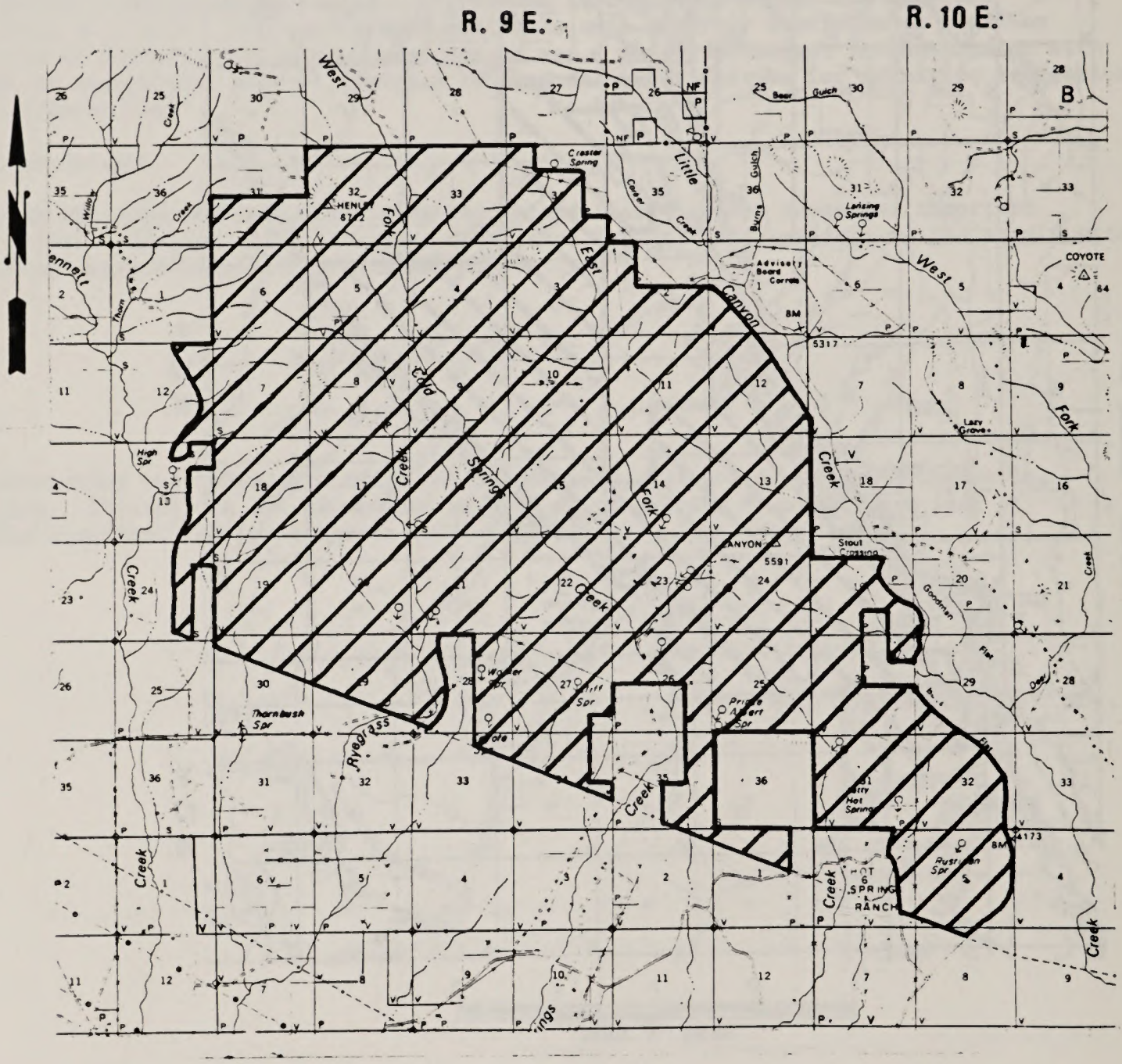


LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

19–1
COLD SPRINGS CREEK



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

This unit was identified as a Wilderness Study Area on August 10, 1979, based on the results of the accelerated wilderness inventory conducted for the Agricultural Environmental Statement. Re-evaluation of this unit is necessary in order to assure consistency in the application of wilderness review criteria between the earlier and more recent decisions. Obvious inconsistencies currently exist, particularly with regard to the manner in which naturalness, external influences, configuration, and outstanding opportunities were assessed in the earlier inventory.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 21,380 acres of BLM land, with four non-federal inholdings, totalling 1,040 acres. The unit has an irregular triangle shape, approximately eight by five miles. A dead-end road providing access from the south to 160 acres of private land within the body of the unit lies outside the unit boundary. This road penetrates two-thirds of the distance across the unit. The dominant natural features of the unit are the mountains and drainages associated with the Mount Bennett Hills.

NATURALNESS:

The unit was judged to be substantially natural in character in the original decision. It was recognized that there are some imprints of man - fences, developed springs and ways - in the unit. Re-evaluation shows that the wide distribution of light imprints leaves the area's apparent natural character intact. About 3,000 acres in three areas in the southern portion are judged to contain substantially noticeable imprints of man - chiefly developed springs and access routes - due to their concentration in a relatively small area.

SOLITUDE:

In the original decision the unit was judged to offer outstanding opportunities for solitude, chiefly due to the relief and natural features associated with the mountains and drainages within the unit. However, the factor of configuration and its effect on the opportunities were not considered adequately. Reevaluation shows that patterns of dead-end roads and non-federal lands that create constricted areas of public lands, and narrow configurations may cause severe impacts on opportunities for solitude and recreation. Reconsideration of the unit in these terms shows that the pattern of two dead-end roads from the south and non-federal lands in the central portion of the unit in effect creates three narrow, north-south corridors within the unit, varying from 1-2 miles in width and 3-6 miles in length. The extreme northern portion of the unit contains about 4,500 acres of contiguous public land in a rectangular configuration. Due to the effect of these narrow corridors, it is judged that it is more difficult for the user to find a secluded spot than was indicated in the original decision. The small size and long, narrow shape of each of these corridors reduces the effective size of the area where the user may find seclusion. In spite of the moderately good screening provided by natural features within the unit, the internal configuration is judged to render opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are limited by the narrow, confined corridors of travel possible between dead-end roads and non-federal lands. Only in the northern portion is travel more or less unrestricted, but the small size of this portion, combined with the corridor effect present in the majority of the unit, is judged to render opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation less than outstanding.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that specifically addressed unit 19-1 agreed with the proposed decision to drop the unit from further wilderness consideration, because the unit lacked naturalness and did not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

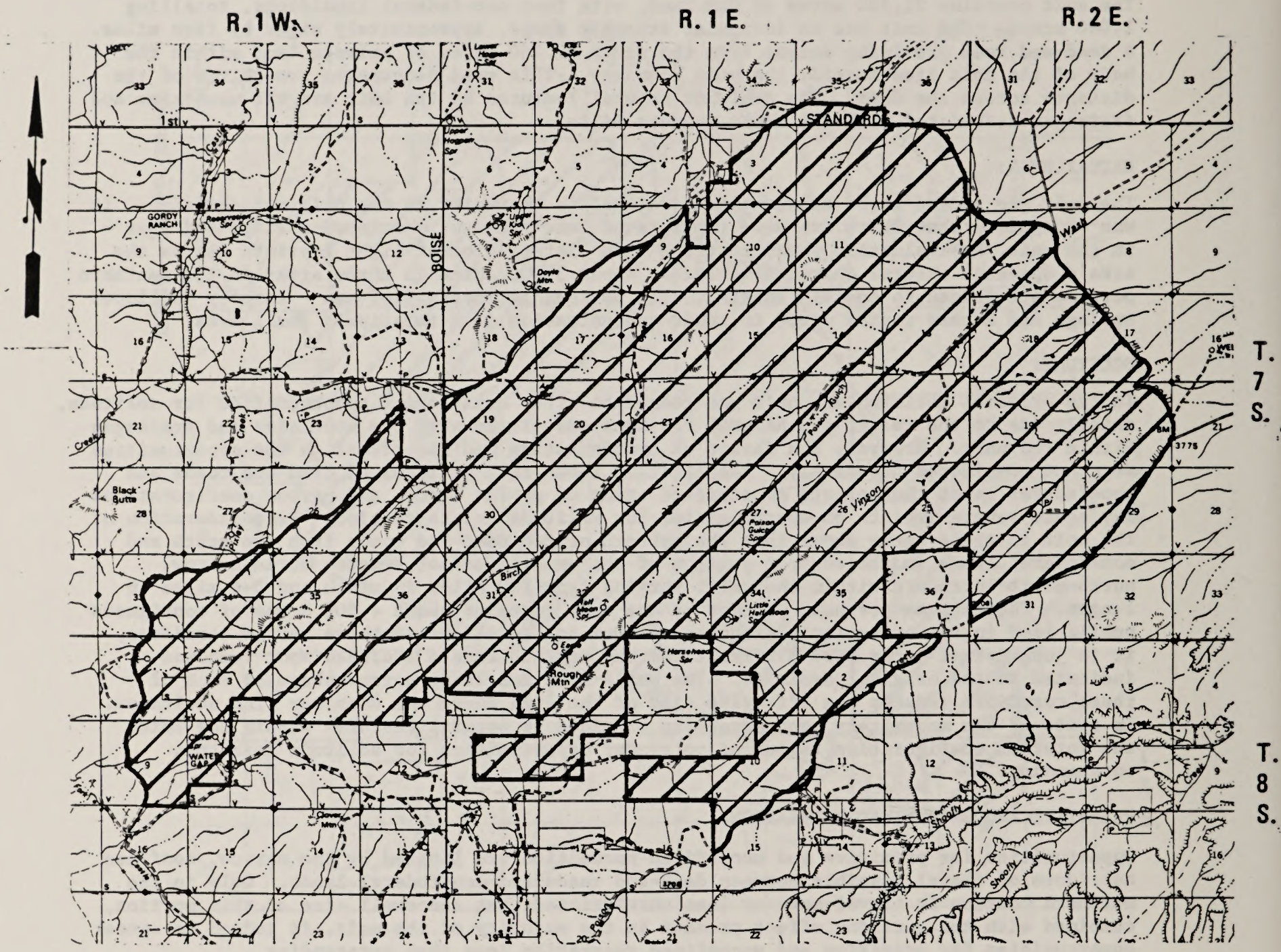
Contrary to public comment, the unit is judged to be substantially natural, with the exception of a small area containing a concentration of man's imprints.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

111–5
POISON GULCH



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 30,742 acres of BLM land in a very irregular configuration, about 12 miles long and six miles wide with one state inholding and two private inholdings. It is located 18 miles southwest of Grandview. The unit lies in a region of steep mountains and rolling hills dominated by the four parallel drainages of Birch Creek, Poison Gulch, Vinson Creek and Poison Creek. The vegetation is dominated by northern desert shrubs and grasses with isolated patches of heavy riparian vegetation in the drainage bottoms.

NATURALNESS:

The initial inventory identified low-standard roads in two major drainages of the unit, Birch Creek and Poison Gulch. These roads, in combination with an additional road identified along the east side of Rough Mountain and intruding state lands along the southern periphery of the unit create two narrow land necks which in effect divide the unit into three subunits. The western subunit of over 10,000 acres has a major fence line system running through its center, several fences in the southern periphery, and two major developed springs cut into hillsides. These springs and their service roads are visible from great distances because of topography and the amount of soil disturbance. The central subunit of over 7,600 acres is relatively free of intrusions except for a major way cutting to the center of the subunit and a developed spring in the southern periphery. The eastern subunit is cut in half by a substantial way, and a way also penetrates to private land in the eastern periphery. There is also a fence line in the southern finger of the subunit. The imprints of man in each of the subunits generally cause localized impacts but are not substantially noticeable in the subunits as a whole, except in some portions of the western subunit.

SOLITUDE:

The dominance of low shrubby and grassy vegetation in the unit offers minimal vegetative screening. The rugged mountainous terrain of the western subunit, with its numerous draws running perpendicular to Birch Creek, offers fair to good topographic screening. However, this topographic layout tends to draw visitors into a narrow corridor of use along Birch Creek and increase the potential of visitor contacts. The relatively straight, open character of the canyon would enhance this corridor effect. In addition, much of the Birch Creek canyon area, where opportunities for solitude would be greatest, is state land. Outside Birch Creek canyon, the unit is generally confined to narrow land fingers where opportunities for solitude are minimal. The relatively small size of the subunit, the corridor effect at its core, the lack of adequate vegetative and topographic screening, and the generally poor configuration of the subunit renders the opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

The central subunit of over 9,600 acres is comprised of a long series of ridges running north-south throughout the length of the subunit. These ridge lines give way to numerous draws often with steep gradients, where varying amounts of topographic screening occur depending upon the depth and steepness of gradient. However, the short lengths of these draws combined with a lack of significant vegetative screening and the small size and narrow configuration of the subunit render the opportunities for solitude less than outstanding. The eastern subunit of over 9,000 acres is comprised of a rolling to steep hilly region dissected by numerous shallow drainages. This terrain, because of its shallow open character, provides only poor to fair topographic screening. The lack of adequate topographic screening combined with a lack of vegetative screening and the subunit's small size and poor configuration renders the opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The primitive and unconfined recreational opportunities within the unit include backpacking, camping, hiking, horseback riding, fishing and hunting. The small size of each subunit, their relatively uniform character, and the lack of any exceptional or unusual natural features and recreational attractions render the opportunities for solitude less than outstanding. The mental and physical challenge associated with the recreational opportunities is considered to be moderate.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Specific reasons given for supporting the proposed decision not to identify the unit as a study area included:

- The unit is not substantially natural, fences and service roads in portions of the unit represent significant instances of man's presence.

- Opportunities for solitude are limited because the dominance of low sagebrush and grass vegetation offers minimal screening.

- There are limited opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

Specific reasons were not given by those requesting study area identification for the unit.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

The proposed decision identified several roads and ways, fence lines, livestock water developments, and mining activity. While the road systems represent substantial intrusions into the unit, resulting in subdividing the unit into three natural areas, many of the isolated range developments are not considered substantially noticeable in the unit as a whole, even though some have significant localized impact, because of steep topography and low vegetation.

Solitude:

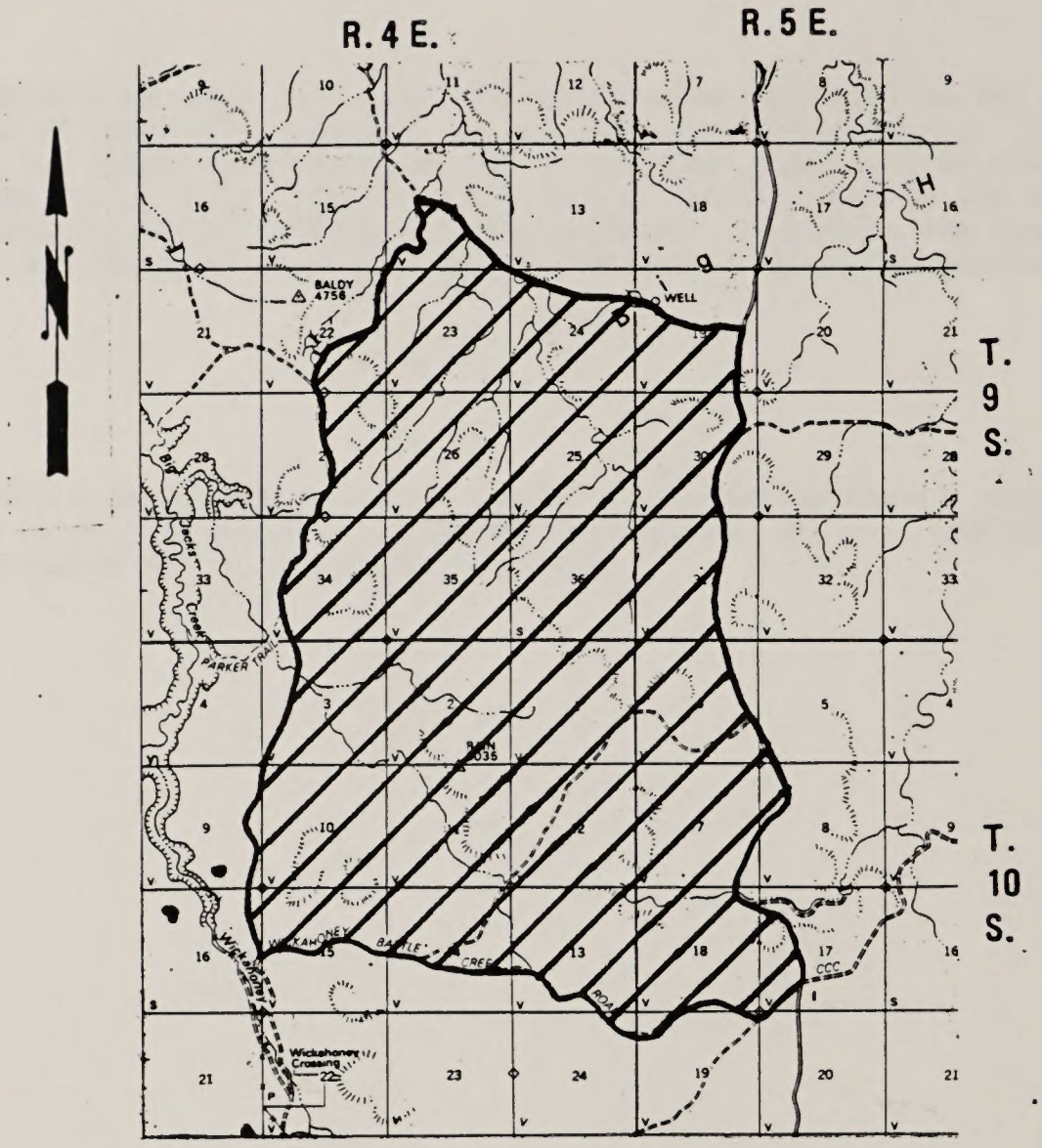
As stated in the proposed decision, the unit lacks outstanding opportunities for solitude due to a combination of topographic features and minimal vegetative screening. Although some of the canyons and rugged mountainous terrain in portions of the unit do offer solitude, the topographic layout would clearly draw visitors into narrow corridors of use and increase the potential for visual contact in these corridors. Therefore, the opportunity to avoid the sights and sounds of others in the unit (solitude) cannot be considered outstanding.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

111–7a
BIG HILL



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

111-7a BIG HILL

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 12,924 acres of BLM land, in a rectangular configuration 6 1/2 miles long by four miles wide, with one state inholding centrally located. The unit is located along the west side of Highway 51, 18 miles south of Bruneau. The unit lies in a gently rolling to moderately hilly region. The terrain generally consists of uniform ridges and shallow drainages radiating from a low flat-topped hill in the south-central portion of the unit, with the more prominent drainages running in a northerly direction. Much of the unit has been recently burned and consists of grasses with pockets of unburned desert shrubs.

NATURALNESS:

The unit is significantly impacted by ways and numerous bladed fire lines, rehabilitated by mechanical means which give the lines a cultivated appearance. There is a fence crossing the unit in a north-south direction to the core of the unit. At the center of the unit this fence turns east and connects with the northeast boundary. The fence is associated with a crested wheatgrass seeding.

SOLITUDE:

The dominance of grassy and shrubby vegetation in the unit offers minimal vegetative screening. The rolling to moderately hilly terrain generally offers poor to fair topographic screening. Isolated areas in shallow drainages in the northern portion of the unit offer good topographic screening. Highway 51 is readily visible from large portions of the eastern half of the unit. Though isolated areas offer solitude, the small size of the unit combined with the general lack of vegetative and topographic screening and the influence of Highway 51 render the opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The primitive recreational opportunities in the unit include camping, backpacking, hiking and horseback riding. The small size and uniform character of the unit, and the lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreational attractions render the recreational opportunities less than outstanding. There is no significant mental or physical challenge associated with the recreational opportunities.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that specifically addressed unit 111-7a were in agreement that the unit should not be identified as a study area because of 1) a lack of naturalness and 2) a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude due to insufficient topographic and vegetative screening and significant external influences from Highway 51.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

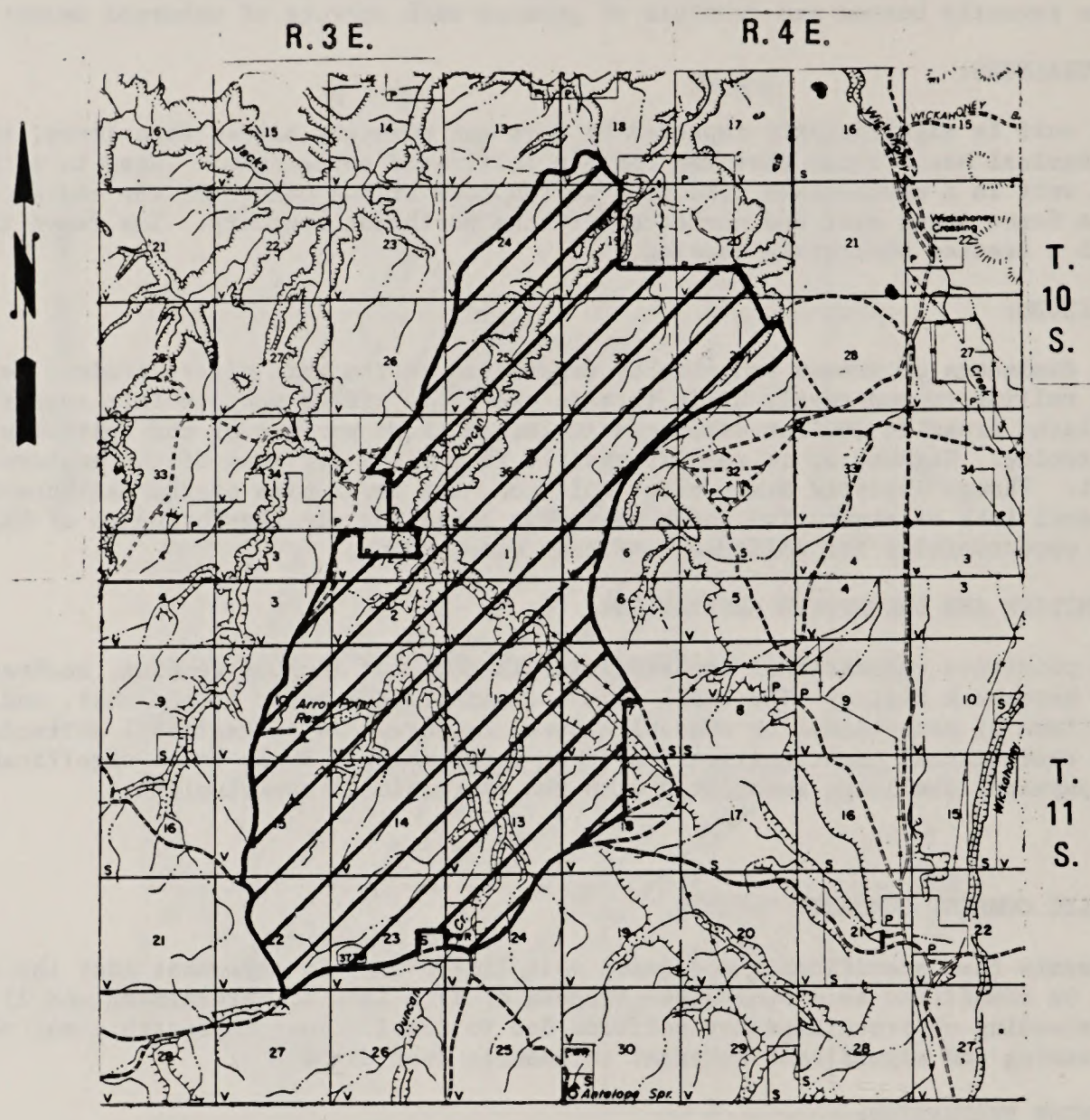
Public comment supported the conclusion that the area should not be identified as a study area for reasons specified in the proposed decision.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

DUNCAN CREEK



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

111-7b DUNCAN CREEK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 10,005 acres of BLM land, in an area eight miles long and 2-4 miles wide. There is one centrally located state inholding which nearly cuts the unit in half. The unit is located ten miles west of Highway 51, 28 miles southwest of Bruneau. The unit lies in a flat to gently rolling region dominated by the relatively deep canyon system of Duncan Creek and Zeno Canyon. The vegetation of the unit is dominated by northern high desert shrub species with riparian vegetation in the canyon bottoms.

NATURALNESS:

Imprints of man are limited to a fence line in association with the state inholding in the northern half, two stock ponds and a light way in the southwest periphery, and another short fence line in the southeast periphery of the unit. An area of 600 acres on the east has been seeded but appears natural in character. These imprints are not substantially noticeable; the unit appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature.

SOLITUDE:

The dominance of low shrubby vegetation over much of the unit affords minimal vegetative screening. Only in the canyon bottoms, where riparian vegetation is heavy, can vegetative screening be considered fair to excellent. The canyon system within the unit affords fair to excellent topographic screening, especially in the central portion of the unit where the canyons are narrow and tightly meandering. However, the canyons would tend to concentrate users in a narrow corridor along the western half of the unit and increase the potential for visitor contacts. The number of miles of canyon combined with its meandering character and heavy riparian vegetation would tend to minimize this corridor effect. Due to the unit's small size and narrow configuration, complicated by the state inholding, opportunities for solitude are not considered outstanding because of the limited area which offers topographic and vegetative screening.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive recreational opportunities within the unit are primarily associated with the canyons, and include camping, backpacking, hiking, nature photography and sightseeing. The quality of recreational opportunities is generally considered to be less than outstanding because of the limited area which offers natural features and recreational attractions.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The area contains scenic values associated with the canyon and ecological values, including spring red-banded trout populations and important sage grouse habitat.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments opposed to a study area stated that the unit did not have outstanding opportunities for solitude or for primitive recreation because of minimal vegetative and topographic screening, and that the unit lacked naturalness.

Those supporting the unit as a study area gave the following reasons:

- Surrounding roads (boundary roads) are not obtrusive; roads are really ways because they are not maintained.

- The unit is natural because imprints of man are insignificant.

- The unit has outstanding opportunities for solitude because the numerous miles of narrow branching canyons and draws provide solitude and do not cause a significant corridor effect.

- The unit offers outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation because of the narrow canyons and the diversity of recreational opportunities including hiking, camping, sightseeing, hunting and photography.

- The unit has outstanding supplemental values including exceptional scenery and wildlife values (bighorn sheep, mule deer, antelope, sage grouse, and redbanded trout habitat).

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

Public comment stated that the boundary roads are generally unobtrusive and that the imprints of man are insignificant; several points should be noted, however.

Though the western and southern boundary roads are not readily visible from within the unit because these roads generally lie at equal or slightly higher elevations than the lands within the study area, the minimal topographic relief and low vegetation permits visitors to the periphery of the unit to have visual contact with vehicles traveling on the roads. These roads are major service roads and receive regular use. Therefore, these roads exert an external influence upon the southern and eastern peripheries of the unit.

It should be noted that the fence line referred to in the proposed decision, which is located in association with a state section, consists only of a remnant blading of a now removed fence.

Solitude:

Public comment stated that the canyon systems provide opportunities for solitude because of the mitigating effect that the number of miles of branching canyons, the meandering character of the canyons and the riparian vegetation have on the corridor effect of the canyon.

A re-evaluation of the unit recognizes that, with the minimal vegetative and topographic screening provided by the rolling plateau lands, when considered in combination with the topographic and vegetative screening of the canyons and the corridor effect of the canyons, outstanding opportunities for solitude are not provided in the majority of the unit. As stated in the roadless/naturalness evaluation, notable external influences (regular vehicle traffic on boundary roads) can be experienced in the southern and eastern peripheries of the unit.

Primitive Recreation:

It is recognized that the small size of an area does not necessarily limit opportunities for primitive recreation, particularly if the area involved has exceptional or unusual natural features and recreational attractions. This unit offers ten miles of narrow canyon to explore by foot which is a small area. Therefore, with the overall small size of the unit, the number of miles of interesting hiking within the unit would not make opportunities for primitive recreation outstanding.

Supplemental Values:

The presence of supplemental values does not qualify an area as a study area if other characteristics are not present.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

111-12 SHEEP TRAIL

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 19,702 acres of BLM land with one state inholding. The unit is six miles long and five miles wide, and is located 33 miles southwest of Bruneau, and 30 miles northwest of Grasmere. The unit consists of a flat to rolling plateau dissected by several shallow drainages. Rock Creek drains north to south through the central portion of the unit. Ridges support broken stands of mountain mahogany, while the major portion of the unit is dominated by northern desert shrub species.

NATURALNESS:

Imprints of man include an extensive system of light to substantial ways in the north and northwest portions of the unit; two light ways and a bladed cat trail in the south; 13 water developments, ten in the western portion with a major concentration of seven stock ponds in the west central portion. The eastern portion of the unit is essentially free of substantial developments. In the western 8,000 acres of the unit, containing thirteen miles of ways and ten stock ponds, human imprints are extremely noticeable. An area of approximately 11,000 acres in the eastern portion of the unit appears to retain its natural character.

SOLITUDE:

The desert shrubs dominant in the unit offer poor vegetative screening. Mountain mahogany stands are too sparse and scattered to provide effective screening. Topographic screening is also poor due to the flat to gently rolling terrain. The relatively small size of the portion of the unit that retains its natural character, together with poor overall screening renders the opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive recreation opportunities include hiking, backpacking, camping, horseback riding, hunting, wildlife observation and photography. However, the lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions renders the recreation opportunities less than outstanding. Challenge associated with primitive recreation in the area is not considered significant.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains ecological values, including antelope range and fawning habitat.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that specifically addressed unit 111-12 agreed with the proposed decision that the unit should not be identified as a study area. Specific reasons given for supporting the decision were that the western half of the unit was not natural because of numerous stock ponds, roads and ways, and the unit did not have outstanding opportunities for solitude because of a lack of sufficient topographic and vegetative screening.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

As stated in the proposed decision, the western portion of the unit is not natural because of the concentration of imprints of man.

Solitude:

Throughout the inventory, BLM has relied upon the relationship of unit size as it is affected by the presence of topography and vegetation to determine the opportunities for solitude. It is generally recognized that low vegetaion on flat terrain can provide excellent screening if the area involved is sufficiently large. Low vegetation over sufficient distance can provide a blending effect where other visitors or external influences (such as vehicles traveling on boundary roads) can disappear into the landscape.

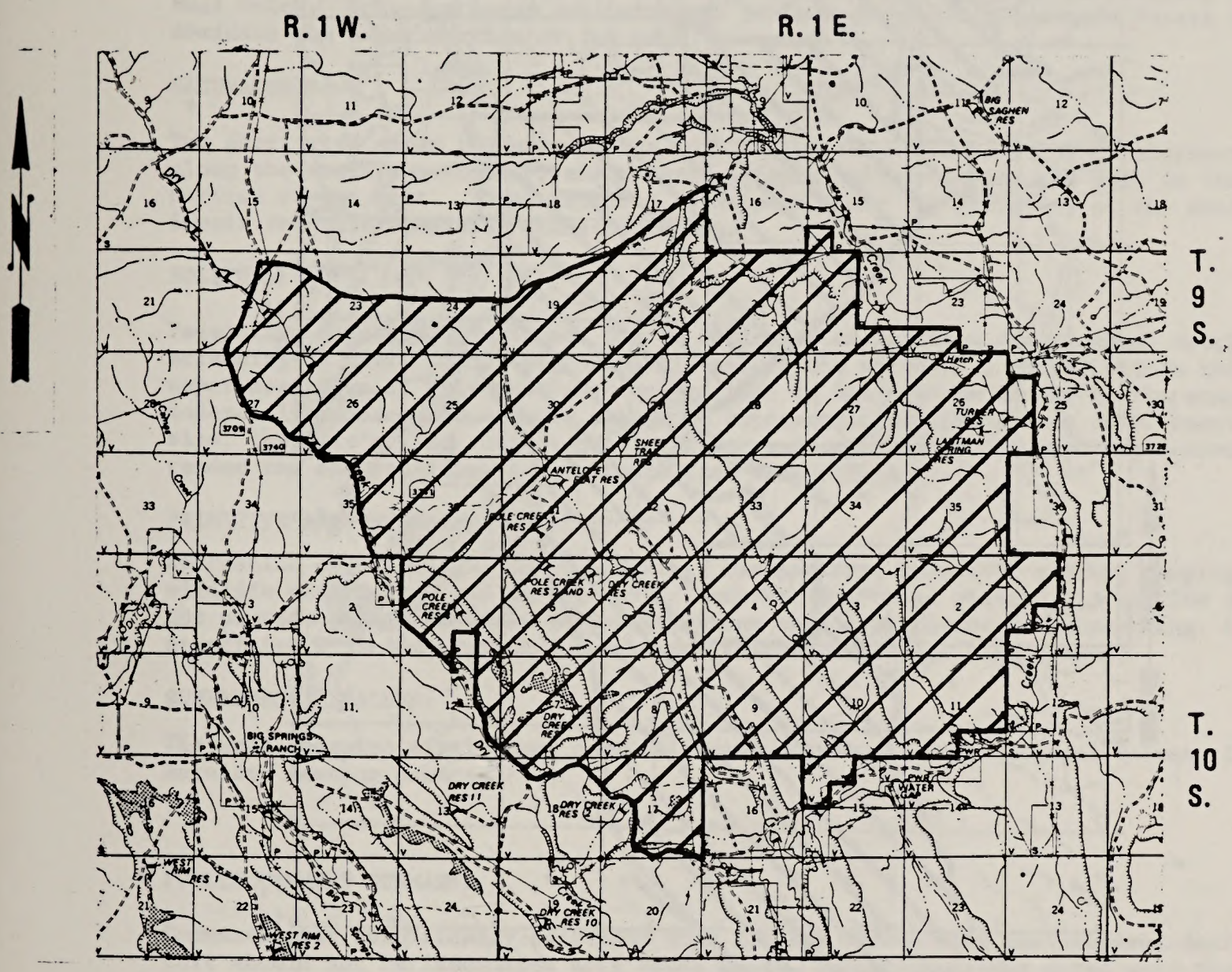
The major factor in determining whether the opportunity for solitude in any given unit can be considered outstanding is whether the unit is sufficiently large enough to allow the blending of a realistic amount of visitor use into the landscape. In this area of the district, vegetation is typified as being extremely short and extremely sparse. This vegetative cover requires significantly more distance than is available in the natural portion of the unit to provide adequate blending of a realistic amount of visitors or external influences. Therefore, the opportunities for solitude cannot be considered outstanding.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness in the western portion, and a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

111-12
SHEEP TRAIL



LEGEND

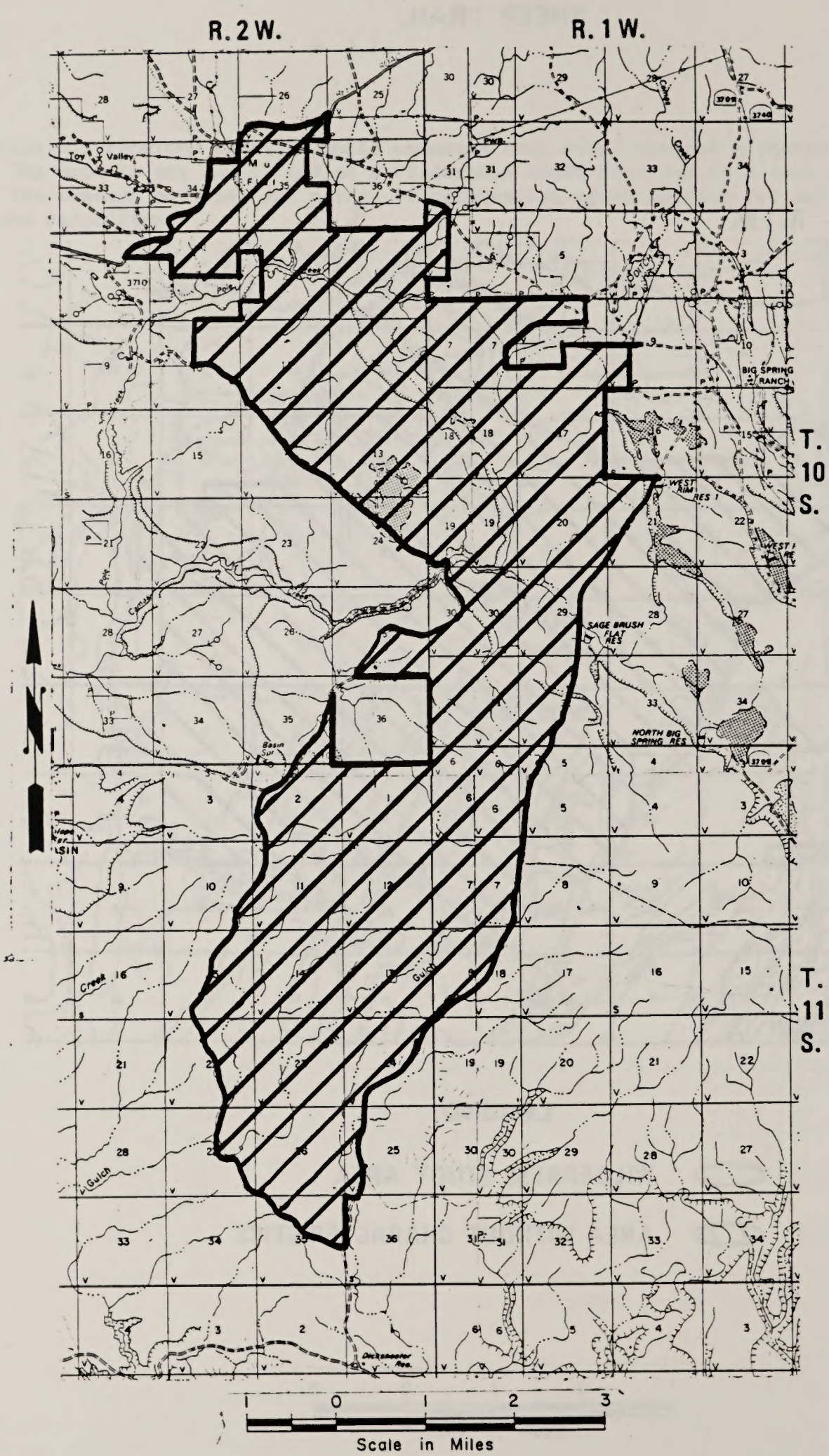
WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

111–19a
CAMAS CREEK



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

111-19a CAMAS CREEK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 19,347 acres of BLM land. It is extremely long and narrow, approximately 12 miles by 1 1/2 - 3 miles, and is located 33 miles northwest of Grasmere. The northern part of the unit is a level, moderately dissected tableland drained by Camas Creek, which flows through the unit for four miles, and Pole Creek, which flows through the extreme north of the unit for two miles. The southern portion of the unit is a moderate southwest slope from a broad, open spur ridge of Big Springs Butte, which occupies the central portion. The slope is moderately dissected by shallow drainages and small basins, draining southwest via Bull Gulch. Some scattered juniper occur in the north, while northern desert plant species dominate the major portion of the unit.

NATURALNESS:

Two short ways enter the unit in the northern portion. Three water developments are scattered along the western periphery, and a fence extends halfway across the unit in the southern portion of the unit. These imprints, scattered about the periphery of the unit, do not impair the unit's natural characteristics.

SOLITUDE:

Vegetative screening is minimal due to dominance of northern desert shrub species. Topographic screening is poor in most of the unit; only in the northern portion, within the shallow upper drainages of Pole and Camas Creeks, and in the extreme south, in the area of the moderately dissected southwest slope, is topographic screening even fair. Despite its large size, the unit's long, narrow configuration and poor topographic and vegetative screening render the opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreation opportunities include hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, camping, hunting, wildlife observation and photography. However, the broad plateau and shallow drainages do not provide primitive recreation attractions that are considered outstanding. Challenge associated with the primitive recreation is not considered significant.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains significant cultural resource values and ecological values, including antelope fawning habitat.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that specifically addressed unit 111-19a agreed with the proposed decision that the unit should not be identified as a Study Area. Specific reasons given were that the area did not have outstanding opportunities for solitude or for primitive recreation because of a lack of vegetative screening and topography, and that the unit contained imprints of man.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

Contrary to public comment, the unit still retains a natural appearance, as the imprints of man are scattered around the periphery of the unit.

Solitude:

Throughout the inventory, BLM has relied upon the relationship of unit size as it is affected by the presence of topography and vegetation to determine the opportunities for solitude. It is generally recognized that low vegetation on flat terrain can provide excellent screening if the area involved is sufficiently large. Low vegetation over sufficient distance can provide a blending effect where other visitors or external influences (such as vehicles traveling on boundary roads) can disappear into the landscape.

The major factor in determining whether the opportunity for solitude in any given unit can be considered outstanding is whether the unit is sufficiently large enough to allow the blending of a realistic amount of visitor use into the landscape. In this area, vegetation is extremely short and extremely sparse. This vegetative cover requires significantly more distance than is available in this unit to provide adequate blending of a realistic amount of visitors or external influences. Therefore, the opportunities for solitude cannot be considered outstanding.

Primitive Recreation:

Though public comment agreed with the proposed decision that opportunities for primitive recreation are not outstanding, it does not accurately reflect the rationale for the decision. Opportunities for primitive recreation are not dependent upon the availability of topographic and vegetative screening. Opportunities for primitive recreation are dependent upon a unit's size and topographic and/or vegetative diversity or uniqueness to provide for exceptional, unusual or diverse recreation experiences. Flat open country such as in this unit does little to provide for recreation experiences other than the obtainment of a sense of monotony. The achievement of a sense of monotony cannot be considered the fulfillment of an outstanding recreational opportunity.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 33,150 acres of BLM land, and has one state and one private inholding. The unit is 12 miles long and varies from two miles wide in the north to six miles in the south. It is located 33 miles west of Grasmere. The northern portion of the unit is a moderately dissected tableland and small basin draining northwest into Camas Creek. The central and eastern portions are dominated by Big Springs Butte, a long, prominent ridge that drops sharply on the north and east. The southern half is the southwestern slope of the Butte, moderately dissected by small draws and characterized generally by small basins with relatively steep intervening slopes, becoming steeper in the southern part of the unit. Drainage is into upper Dickshooter Creek, located in the extreme south of the unit. Northern desert shrubs and grasses predominate.

NATURALNESS:

A way crosses the extreme northern portion of the unit. Two ways in the southern portion and 12 water developments, concentrated in the southern portion and around the periphery, constitute the other human imprints. Due to their small number and dispersion, man's imprints are considered to be substantially unnoticeable.

SOLITUDE:

Screening is minimal in the unit due to the lack of topographic relief and dominance of desert shrub vegetation. While the unit is quite large, relief is minimal except in an area of about 7,000 acres in the southern portion. The opportunities for solitude are diminished by the dead-end road extending five miles inside the body of the unit. While moderately good opportunities for solitude exist in the unit due to its size and presence of gentle relief in the southern portion, the overall lack of screening and the configuration problem in the southeast portion render these opportunities less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive recreation opportunities include hiking, backpacking, camping, horseback riding, hunting, wildlife observation and photography. However, the lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions renders the opportunities less than outstanding. Challenge associated with primitive recreation in the area is not considered significant.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit includes antelope range and important sage grouse habitat.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that specifically addressed Unit 111-19b agreed with the proposed decision that the unit should not be identified as a Study Area. Specific reasons given were that the area did not have outstanding opportunities for solitude or for primitive recreation because of a lack of topographic relief and vegetation, and that the unit contained imprints of man.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

Contrary to public comment, the unit retains its natural appearance, as the imprints of man are small in number and widely dispersed.

Solitude:

Thoughout the inventory, BLM has relied upon the relationship of unit size as it is affected by the presence of topography and vegetation to determine the opportunities for solitude. It is generally recognized that low vegetation on flat terrain can provide excellent screening if the area involved is sufficiently large. Low vegetation over sufficient distance can provide a blending effect where other visitors or external influences (such as vehicles traveling on boundary roads) can disappear into the landscape.

The major factor in determining whether the opportunity for solitude in any given unit can be considered outstanding is whether the unit is sufficiently large enough to allow the blending of a realistic amount of visitor use into the landscape. In this area, vegetation is extremely short and extremely sparse. This vegetative cover requires significantly more distance than is available in this unit to provide adequate blending of a realistic amount of visitors or external influences. Therefore, the opportunities for solitude cannot be considered outstanding.

Primitive Recreation:

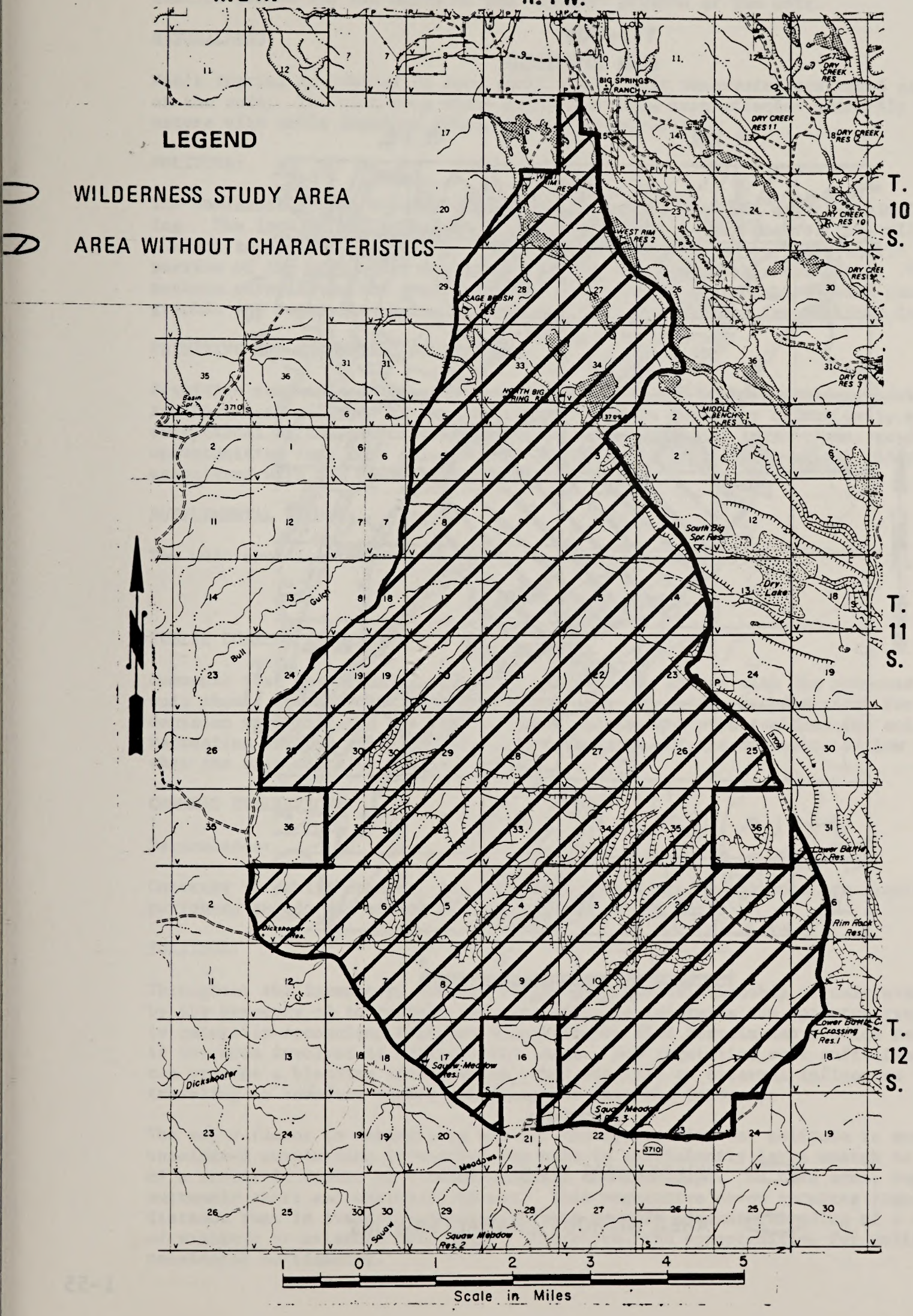
Though public comment agreed with the proposed decision that opportunities for primitive recreation are not outstanding, it does not accurately reflect the rationale for the decision. Opportunities for primitive recreation are not dependent upon the availability of topographic and vegetative screening. Opportunities for primitive recreation are dependent upon a unit's size and topographic and/or vegetative diversity or uniqueness to provide for exceptional, unusual or diverse recreation experiences. Flat open country such as in this unit does little to provide for recreation experiences other than the obtainment of a sense of monotony. The achievement of a sense of monotony cannot be considered the fulfillment of an outstanding recreational opportunity.

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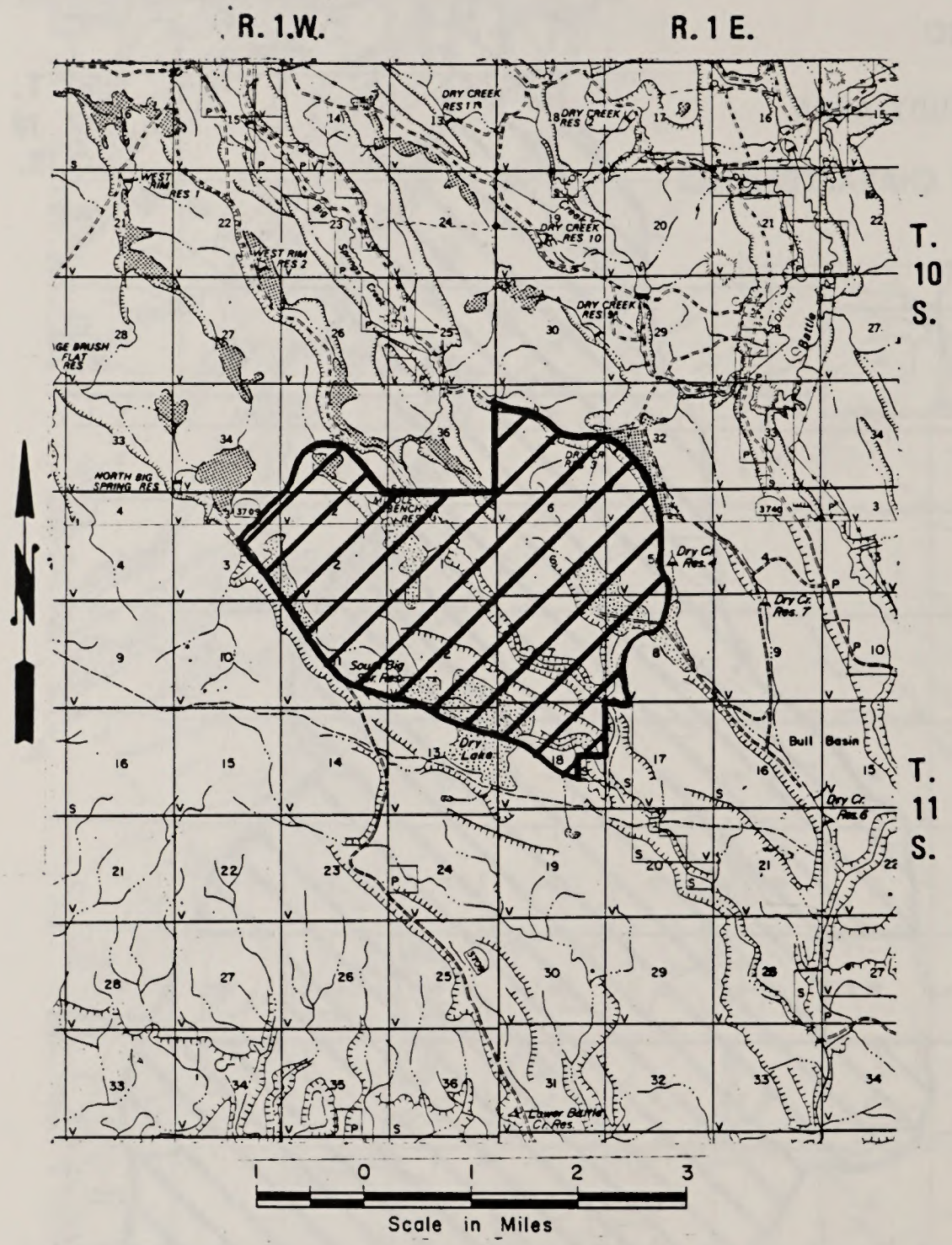
DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

111–19b
BULL GULCH



111–20a
BIG SPRINGS



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

111-20a BIG SPRINGS

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 5,342 acres of BLM land in an area four miles long and three miles wide. It is located 27 miles northwest of Grasmere, and 45 miles southwest of Bruneau. The unit lies on a relatively flat plateau covered with northern desert shrub vegetation. The plateau is lightly eroded into shallow basins and drainages. Big Springs Creek flows through a shallow canyon for two miles in the southern portion of the unit.

NATURALNESS:

Man's imprint is limited to four small stock water reservoirs scattered around the periphery of the unit. The unit as a whole appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature with man's imprints substantially unnoticeable.

SOLITUDE:

The dominance of low shrubby vegetation throughout the unit offers minimal vegetative screening. The lack of any significant topographic relief over much of the unit also offers minimal topographic screening. The shallow basin and canyon areas in the south-central portion of the unit offer isolated areas of fair topographic screening. Though small isolated pockets of solitude are available, the unit's small size combined with generally poor topographic and vegetative screening renders the opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive recreational opportunities within the unit include camping, backpacking, hiking and horseback riding. The small size and uniform character of the unit, and the lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreational attractions, renders the recreational opportunities less than outstanding. There is no significant mental and physical challenge associated with the recreational opportunities.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains important antelope and sage grouse habitat.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that specifically addressed unit 111-20a agreed with the proposed decision that the unit should not be identified as a study area. Specific reasons given for supporting the decision were that the area did not have outstanding opportunities for solitude or for primitive recreation because of the topography of the area and the dominance of low vegetaiton, and that the unit contains imprints of man.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

Contrary to public comment, the few stock reservoirs in the unit are scattered around the periphery and do not effect the naturalness of the unit.

SOLITUDE:

Throughout the inventory, BLM has relied upon the relationship of unit size as it is affected by the presence of topography and vegetation to determine the opportunities for solitude. It is generally recognized that low vegetation on flat terrain can provide excellent screening if the area involved is sufficiently large. Low vegetation over sufficient distance can provide a blending effect where other visitors or external influences (such as vehicles traveling on boundary roads) can disappear into the landscape.

The major factor in determining whether the opportunity for solitude in any given unit can be considered outstanding is whether the unit is sufficiently large enough to allow the blending of a realistic amount of visitor use into the landscape. In this area, vegetation is extremely short and extremely sparse. This vegetative cover requires significantly more distance than is available in this unit to provide adequate blending of a realistic amount of visitors or external influences. Therefore, the opportunities for solitude cannot be considered outstanding.

Primitive Recreation:

Though public comment agreed with the proposed decision that opportunities for primitive recreation are not outstanding, it does not accurately reflect the rationale for the decision. Opportunities for primitive recreation are not dependent upon the availability of topographic and vegetative screening. Opportunities for primitive recreation are dependent upon the ability of a unit's topographic and/or vegetative diversity or uniqueness to provide for exceptional, unusual or diverse recreation experiences. Flat open country such as in this unit does little to provide for recreation experiences other than the obtainment of a sense of monotony. The achievement of a sense of monotony cannot be considered the fulfillment of an outstanding recreational opportunity.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

111-20b UPPER BATTLE CREEK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 17,787 acres of BLM land with one state and one private inholding. The unit is 4-5 miles wide and five miles long with a boundary finger on the northeast, and is located 48 miles southwest of Bruneau and 25 miles west of Grasmere. Vegetation is chiefly northern desert shrubs and grasses. Topographically, the unit consists of a broad plateau cut by the drainages of Big Springs and Battle Creeks. The unit includes the confluence of the two creeks. Elevation varies from over 5,800 feet on the plateau to 5,300 feet in Battle Creek Canyon. Relief is minimal except in the lower four miles of Battle Creek Canyon.

NATURALNESS:

There are four water developments in the unit, all within 1/4 mile of the boundary. Human imprints are minimal; the area appears to be affected primarily by natural processes.

SOLITUDE:

The unit's size and configuration are good with the exception of a 4,000 acre finger on the northeast. Topographic screening is poor throughout the unit with the exception of the lower four miles of Battle Creek. The dominant desert shrub vegetation provides minimal screening. Although the unit's moderate size provides some opportunities for solitude, the poor screening in most of the unit renders these opportunities less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreation opportunities include hiking, camping, backpacking, horseback riding, hunting, wildlife observation and photography. However, the lack of unusual or exceptional natural features and recreation attractions render the opportunities for primitive recreation less than outstanding. Challenge associated with recreation in the unit is not considered significant.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains important sage grouse and antelope habitat, and may contain cultural resource values.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that specifically addressed unit 111-20b agreed with the proposed decision that the unit should not be identified as a study area. Specific reasons given for supportung the decision were that the area did not have outstanding opportunities for solitude or for primitive recreation because of the topography of the unit and the dominance of low vegetation, and that the unit contained imprints of man.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

Contrary to public comment, the unit retains its natural appearance as human imprints in the unit are minimal.

Solitude:

Throughout the inventory, BLM has relied upon the relationship of unit size as it is affected by the presence of topography and vegetation to determine the opportunities for solitude. It is generally recognized that low vegetation on flat terrain can provide excellent screening if the area involved is sufficiently large. Low vegetation over sufficient distance can proved a blending effect where other visitors or external influences (such as vehicles traveling on boundary roads) can disappear into the landscape.

The major factor in determining whether the opportunity for solitude in any given unit can be considered outstanding is whether the unit is sufficiently large enough to allow the blending of a realistic amount of visitor use into the landscape. In this area, vegetation is extremely short and extremely sparse. This vegetative cover requires significantly more distance that is available in this unit to provide adequate blending of a realistic amount of visitors or external influences. Therefore, the opportunities for solitude cannot be considered outstanding.

Primitive Recreation:

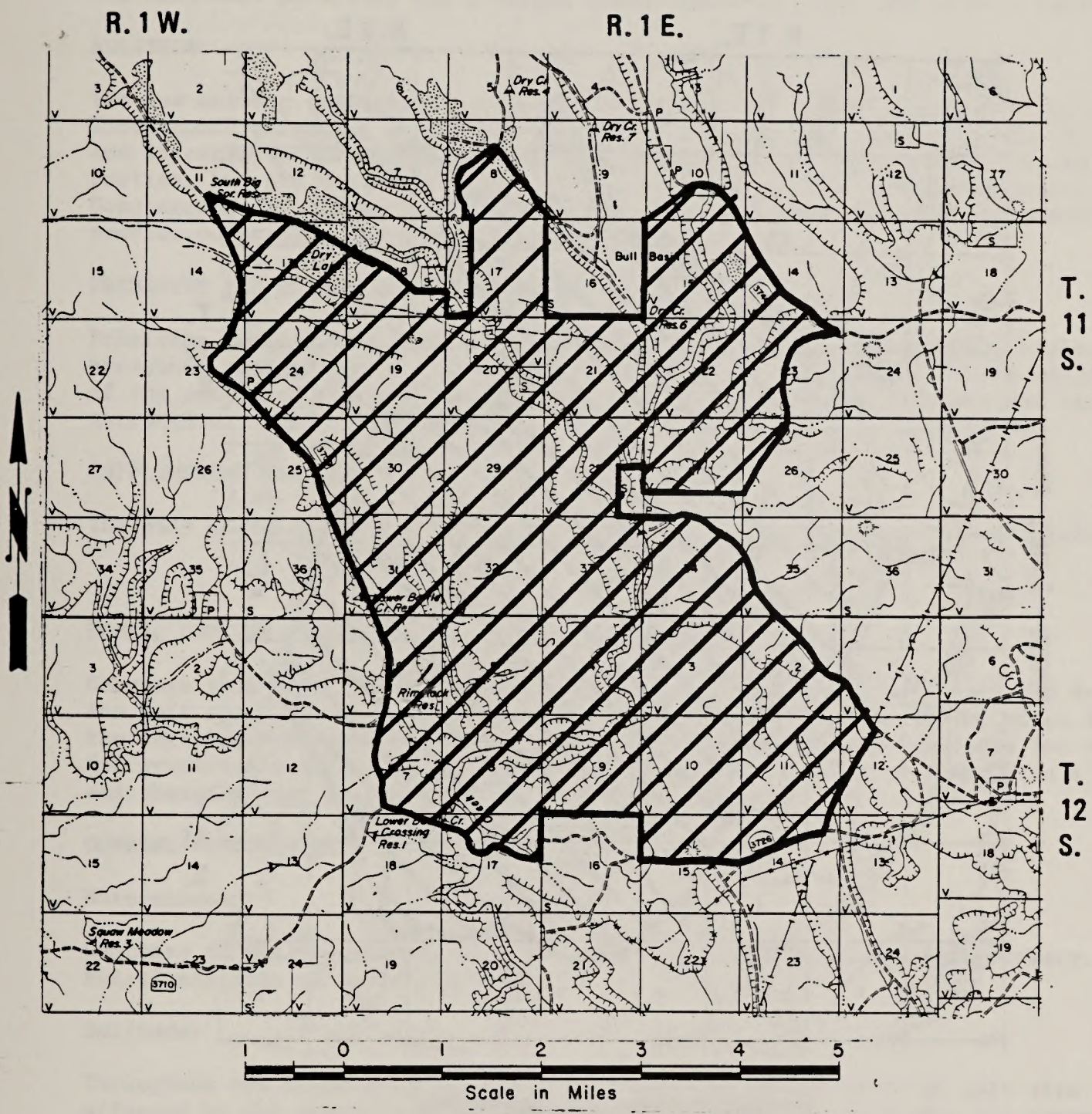
Though public comment agreed with the proposed decision that opportunities for primitive recreation are not outstanding, it does not accurately reflect the rationale for the decision. Opportunities for primitive recreation are not dependent upon the availability of topographic and vegetative screening. Opportunities for primitive recreation are dependent upon a unit's size and topographic and/or vegetative diversity or uniqueness to provide for exceptional, unusual or diverse recreation experiences. Flat open country such as in this unit does little to provide for recreation experiences other than the obtainment of a sense of monotony. The achievement of a sense of monotony cannot be considered the fulfillment of an outstanding recreational opportunity.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

111–20b
UPPER BATTLE CREEK

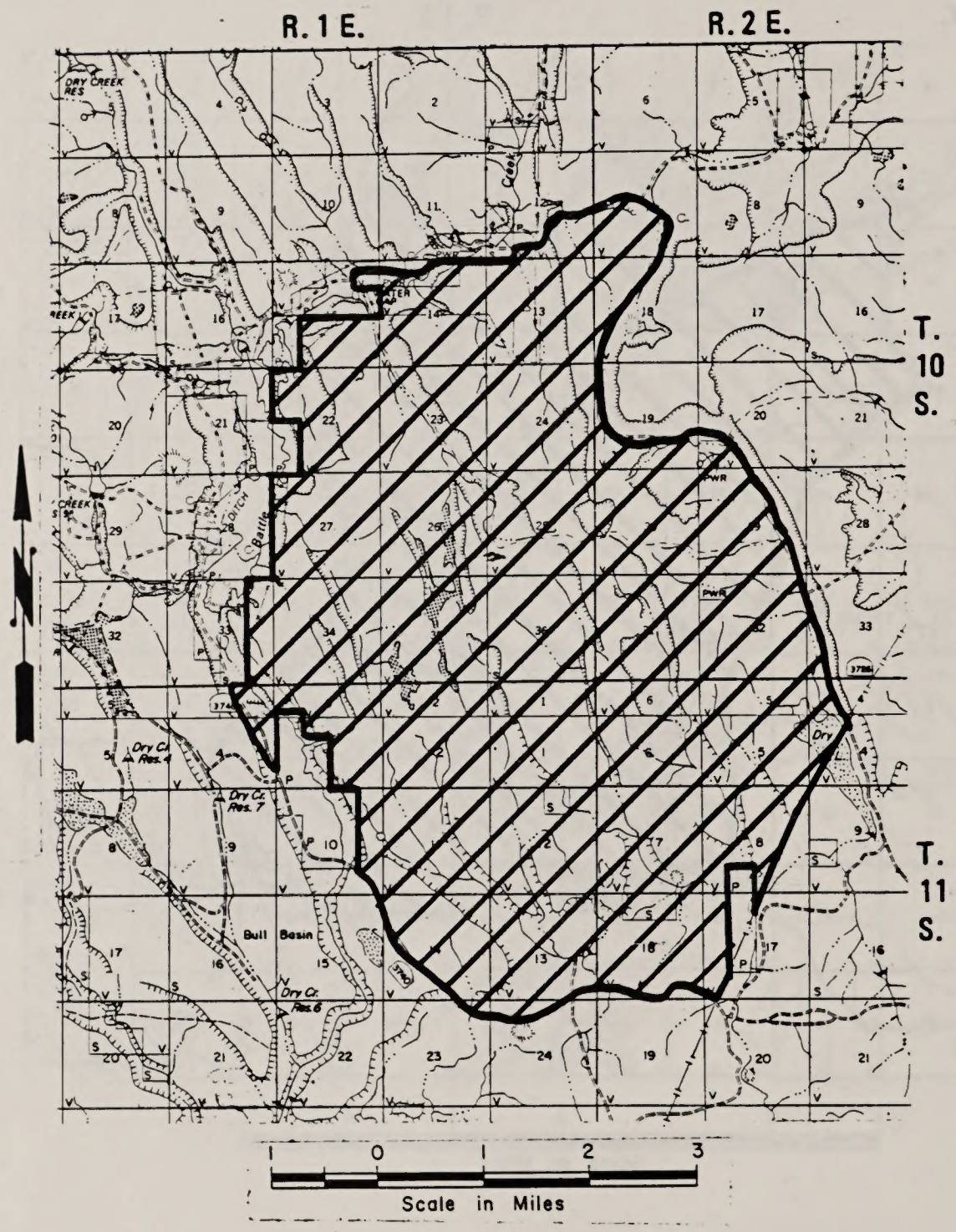


LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

111–21
BULL BASIN



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

111-21 BULL BASIN

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 17,625 acres of BLM land, in a somewhat oval configuration seven miles long and five miles wide, with one state and two private inholdings. It is located 24 miles northwest of Grasmere. The unit lies in a plateau region lightly to moderately eroded into rolling hills ranging in elevation from 5,600 to 6,200 feet. The unit contains no major drainages, although Battle Creek passes the western boundary, entering the unit briefly in spots. Vegetation consists primarily of desert shrub and grass species.

NATURALNESS:

The unit is relatively free of imprints of man, except for two small stock ponds along the northeast periphery and a larger stock reservoir along the south - central periphery.

SOLITUDE:

The low shrubby vegetation occupying the unit offers minimal vegetative screening. Topographic screening is considered poor to fair over much of the unit. Rolling hills and intermittent drainages provide some pockets of solitude, chiefly in the northern portion, but the basin topography of the southern portion is less conducive to solitude. Considering the generally poor screening, the unit's moderate size is insufficient to provide outstanding opportunities for solitude.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive recreational opportunities within the unit include camping, backpacking, horseback riding, hunting and wildlife viewing. The moderate size and uniform character of the unit, and the lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreational attractions render the recreational opportunities less than outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains wildlife values, including antelope range and fawning habitat.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that specifically addressed unit 111-21 agreed with the proposed decision that the unit should not be identified as a study area. Specific reasons given for supporting the decision were that the area did not have outstanding opportunities for solitude or for primitive recreation because of the topography of the area and the lack of vegetation, and that the unit contains imprints of man.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

Contrary to public comment, except for several stock ponds on the periphery, the unit is relatively free of man's imprints.

Solitude:

Throughout the inventory, BLM has relied upon the relationship of unit size as it is affected by the presence of topography and vegetation to determine the opportunities for solitude. It is generally recognized that low vegetation on flat terrain can provide excellent screening if the area involved is sufficiently large. Low vegetation over sufficient distance can provide a blending effect where other visitors or external influences (such as vehicles traveling on boundary roads) can disappear into the landscape.

The major factor in determining whether the opportunity for solitude in any given unit can be considered outstanding is whether the unit is sufficiently large enough to allow the blending of a realistic amount of visitor use into the landscape. In this area of the district, vegetation is typified as being extremely short and extremely sparse. This vegetative cover requires significantly more distance than is available in this unit to provide adequate blending of a realistic amount of visitors or external influences. Therefore, the opportunities for solitude cannot be considered outstanding.

Primitive Recreation:

Though public comment agreed with the proposed decision that opportunities for primitive recreation are not outstanding, it does not accurately reflect the rationale for the decision. Opportunities for primitive recreation are not dependent upon the availability of topographic and vegetative screening. Opportunities for primitive recreation are dependent upon a unit's size and topographic and/or vegetative diversity or uniqueness to provide for exceptional, unusual or diverse recreation experiences. Flat open country such as in this unit does little to provide for recreation experiences other than the obtainment of a sense of monotony. The achievement of a sense of monotony cannot be considered the fulfillment of an outstanding recreation opportunity.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

111-36b SHEEP CREEK EAST

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 12,412 acres of BLM land. It is irregular in shape, 3-5 miles wide and 4-5 miles long, and is located six miles north of the Idaho-Nevada border, 15 miles southeast of Riddle. The area is a level to gently rolling plateau cut by the canyon of Sheep Creek, which passes through the unit for 5 1/2 miles. The creek flows through a relatively shallow, meandering canyon in most of the unit. A zone of dense riparian vegetation occurs in the canyon, while the rest of the unit supports northern desert shrubs and grasses.

NATURALNESS:

A system of ways, totalling four miles, and two stock ponds are located in the northwest portion of the unit. A short way from the road finger in the south extends to the canyon rim. Six stock ponds and a system of three miles of ways are located in the eastern portion. Rolling topography and minimal vegetative screening in this area make these imprints substantially noticeable. About 2,200 acres along the eastern boundary is not considered substantially natural. Approximately 10,200 acres are considered substantially natural in character.

SOLITUDE:

The 5 1/2 miles of Sheep Creek canyon offer good topographic and fair vegetative screening. While the canyon is relatively shallow, its meandering path offers good opportunities for solitude. However, the canyon would tend to concentrate visitors in a narrow corridor of use and increase the potential for visitor contact. This potential for contact is further increased by the relatively short length of the canyon. Though opportunities for solitude are present the potential for visitor contact due to this corridor effect makes the opportunities less than outstanding. Outside the canyon, the unit offers poor vegetative and topographic screening because of the open, gently rolling character of the sagebrush plateau. While the unit contains 10,000 natural acres, the effective size of the area where solitude may be experienced is very small in relation to the total natural area. Because the vast majority of the unit is an open plateau without effective screening and because of the corridor affect of the canyon, the opportunities for solitude in the unit cannot be considered outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreation opportunities include hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, camping, hunting and wildlife observation. Most of these opportunities are associated with Sheep Creek canyon. While the canyon is a scenic recreation attraction, the length of the canyon within the unit is short and good recreation attractions are limited to a small portion of the unit. The shallow, meandering canyon is not considered an outstanding recreation attraction when considered with the small area of the unit it comprises and the necessarily confined use possible within the short length of the canyon.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments opposed to a study area stated that the unit was substantially affected by the imprints of man and that it fails to offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or for primitive recreation because of poor vegetative and topographic screening.

Comments in support of a study area stated that the unit offered outstanding opportunities for solitude and outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation (hiking). It was felt that the unit's close proximity to Idaho's largest population center added to the opportunity for outstanding primitive recreation. The unit was also considered to have outstanding supplemental values including outstanding scenery and wildlife values.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

The proposed decision states that the eastern portion of the unit has impaired naturalness because of stock ponds and 2-wheel tracks (ways). In addition, further review of the area has determined that the northwest portion with its stock ponds and ways is also not natural. In both cases, minimal vegetative screening combined with rolling topographic relief and the concentration of imprints makes the imprints of man substantially noticeable. A way also runs down the major drainage in the southwest portion of the unit. Because of the topographic layout of the area and minimal vegetative screening, the way is noticeable in this portion of the unit. There is an area of 7,540 acres in the unit where the imprints of man's work are substantially unnoticeable.

Solitude:

As stated in the proposed decision, opportunities for solitude are not considered outstanding because of the corridor effect of the canyon, the relative small area of naturalness and the lack of sufficient topographic and vegetative screening. The canyon is recognized to have solitude, but the corridor effect of the canyon cannot be mitigated by the short length (four miles) of canyon. The plateau areas are not considered large enough to enable the rolling topography and the minimal vegetative screening to adequately blend visitors into the landscape. Furthermore, the narrow finger of naturalness in the southeast portion of the unit does not have adeuate configuration considering the topographic layout of the area to effectively screen external influences or provide for adequate dispersion of visitors.

Primitive Recreation:

The proposed decision recognized that opportunities for primitive recreation existed in the unit, but were not judged to be outstanding because of the confinement effect of the short canyon. It is still felt that the short length of canyon does not mitigate the confinement effect of the canyon. However, it is also felt that the proposed decision relied too heavily upon the character of the canyon rather than the unit as a whole to determine opportunites for primitive recreation.

The topography of the canyon is such that a departure from the main canyon onto surrounding plateaus is relatively easy. These plateaus particularly to the the south of the canyon provide a diversity of land forms from flat buttes to rolling hills to shallow washes. The diversity of the plateaus combined with the scenery of the main canyon do provide an opportunity for primitive recreation experiences, but they are considered to be outstanding.

Supplemental Values:

The presence of supplemental values does not qualify the unit as a study area if the other characterisitics are lacking.

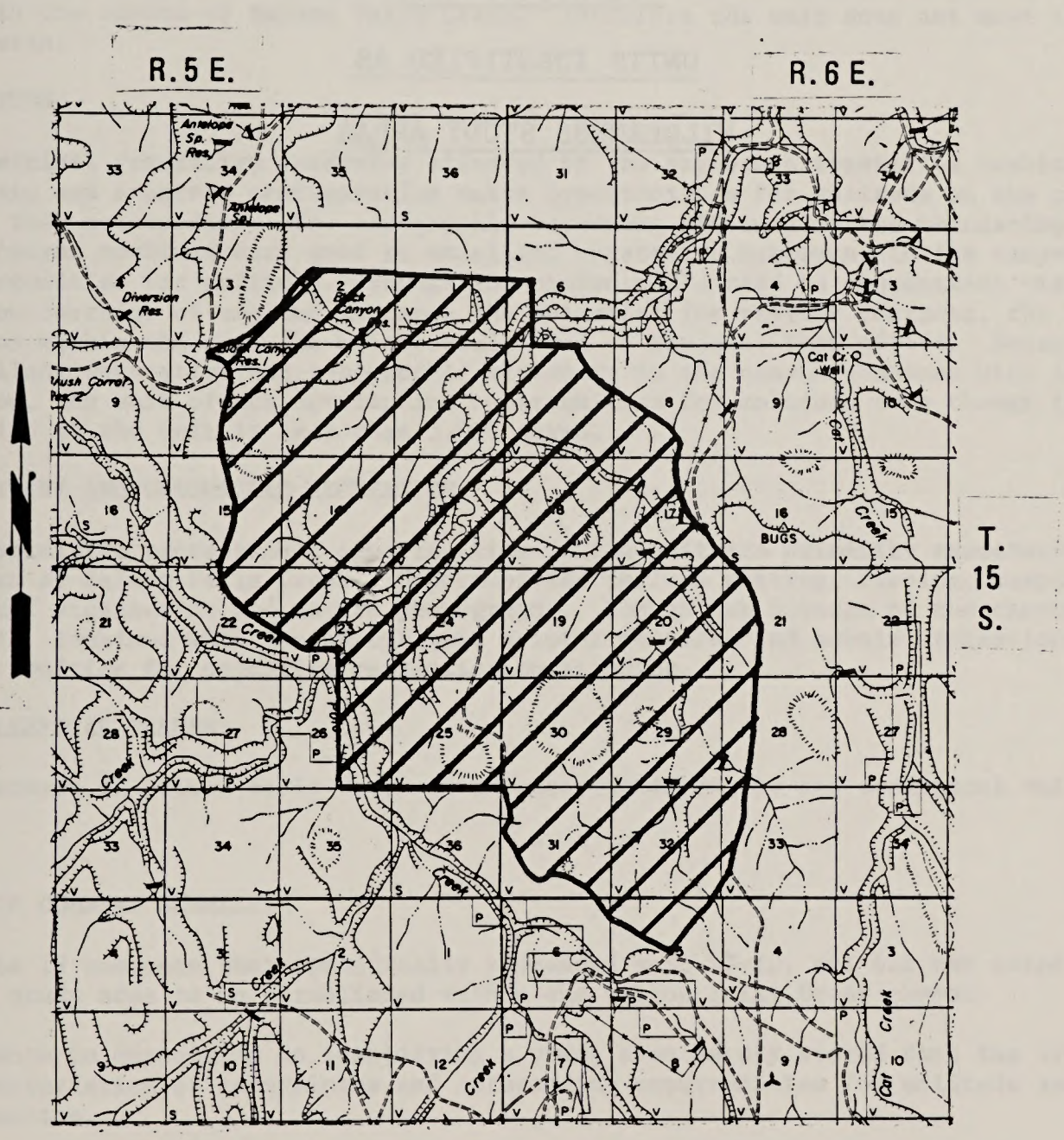
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DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness in a portion of the unit, and to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

111–36b

SHEEP CREEK EAST



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

BOISE DISTRICT

UNITS IDENTIFIED AS

WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

17-10 LOWER SALMON FALLS CREEK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 22,287 acres of BLM land in both the Boise and Burley District: the Boise District having 11,645 acres and the Burley District 10,642 acres. The unit is 16 miles long and 1/2 to 3 miles wide, and is located along Salmon Falls Creek just downstream of Salmon Falls Dam, west of Rogerson. The unit is located on a flat plateau region sharply dissected by the verical-walled, meandering canyon of Salmon Falls Creek which is up to 400 feet deep. The plateau areas and talus slopes of the canyon are dominated by northern high desert shrub species. The canyon bottom is dominated by juniper, willow and other riparian-associated vegetation.

NATURALNESS:

The canyon bottom is free of any imprints of man. However, the naturalness of the plateau area is impaired by numerous intrusions, including fences, ways, and roads all of which lead to the canyon rim at intervals of 3/4 mile to two miles. The casual hiker could not walk the length of the unit on the plateau without encountering these imprints. There are also seeding projects and stock ponds in the periphery of the unit. The total area of the unit where the imprints of man are substantially unnoticeable consists of about 3,500 acres within the canyon of Salmon Falls Creek. Therefore the unit does not meet the size criteria.

SOLITUDE:

The minimal vegetative screening afforded by the sagebrush vegetation combined with flat terrain and a narrow configuration makes opportunities for solitude on the plateau areas less than outstanding. The topographic screening afforded by the meandering character of the canyon combined with good to excellent vegetative screening in the canyon bottom offers opportunities for solitude. Though the canyon would tend to concentrate visitors in a narrow corridor of use and increase the potential for visitor contacts, the length of the canyon within the unit (16 miles) would tend to minimize this effect. Because of the excellent vegetative and topographic screening in the canyon combined with the length of the canyon, the unit offers outstanding opportunities for solitude even though the natural portion of the unit is less than 5,000 acres.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The primitive recreational opportunities in the unit are primarily associated with the canyon of Salmon Falls Creek. Opportunities include hunting, fishing, camping, backpacking, hiking, sightseeing and nature photography. Though the acreage of the canyon is small, its length, combined with its exceptional natural features and scenic attractions makes the opportunities for primitive recreation outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The canyon of Salmon Falls Creek is of exceptional scenic and ecological value.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Of the 19 comments that specifically addressed unit 17-10, all but two asked for a 3,500 acre study area to be established within the Salmon Falls Creek canyon.

Comments in opposition to identifying a study area merely stated that the area lacked the characteristics of naturalness and outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation.

Specific reasons given in favor of the 3,500 acre study area were as follows:

- 3,500 acres within the canyon of Salmon Falls Creek were natural in character.
- The area should not be excluded simply because it is less that 5,000 acres.
- The canyon offers outstanding opportunities for solitude because of its meandering character.
- The canyon offers outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation including excellent fishing, camping and wildlife viewing.
- The canyon area offers outstanding supplemental values including excellent scenery.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Size:

The proposed decision recognized that the 16 mile long canyon of Salmon Falls Creek contained 3,500 acres of natural landscape offering outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation.

Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act states that a wilderness area must be at least 5,000 acres in size or "of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition;..." **The BLM Wilderness Inventory Handbook allows for the identification of study areas under 5,000 acres if there is a show of strong public support and the area can** be managed in an unimpaired condition.

Because this sheer-walled canyon is accessible only by foot it is possible to preserve the small acreage within it in an unimpaired condition. It is clearly evident by the response received during the public comment period, as well as past local attempts to designate the canyon as a natural area, that there is strong public support for including the canyon as a study area.

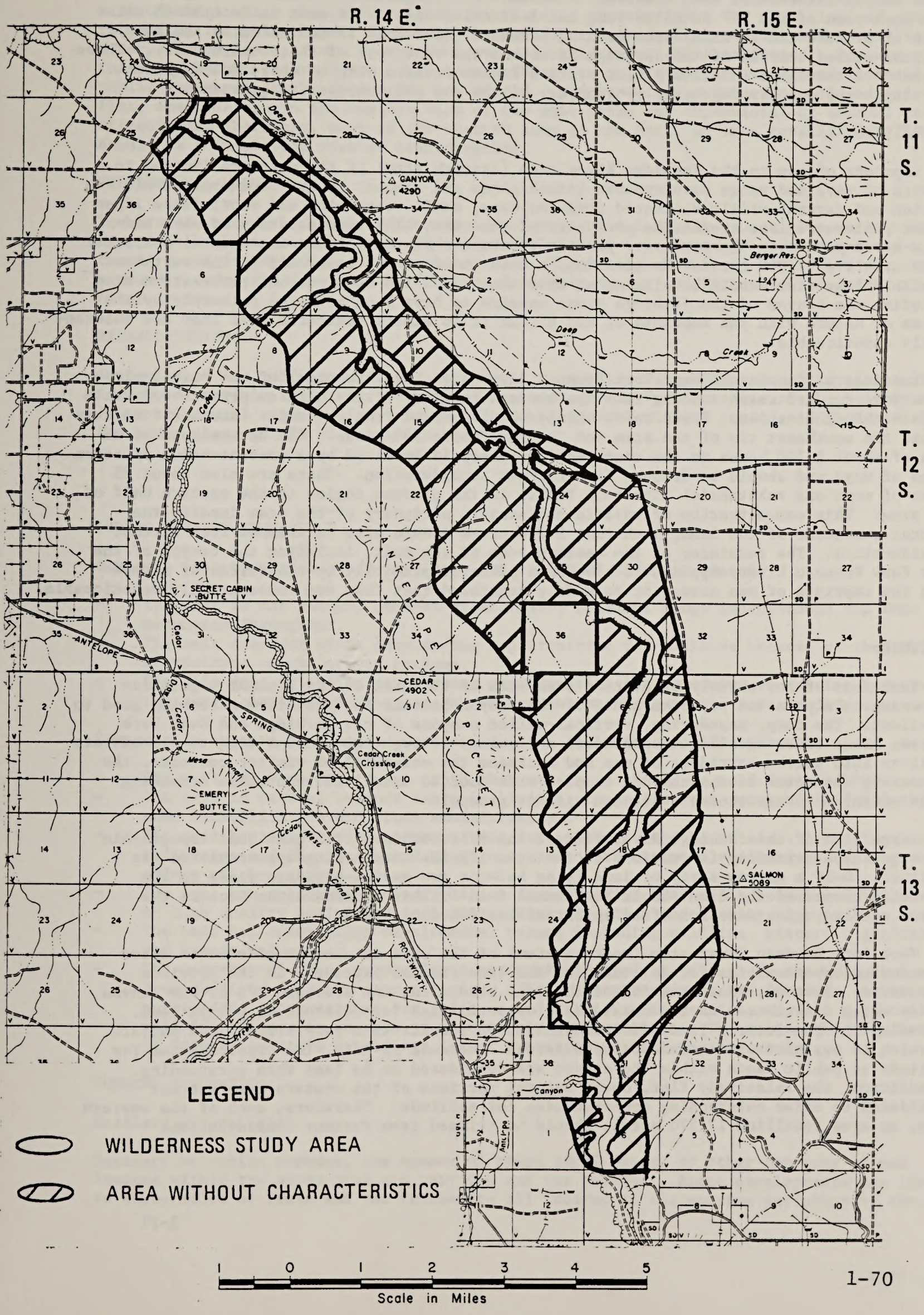
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DECISION:

As a result of public comment, an area of 3,500 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness, and solitude-recreation criteria, and has received strong public support.

17—~~18~~

LOWER SALMON FALLS CREEK



1-70

17-11 JARBIDGE RIVER

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 111,010 acres of BLM land, with seven state and seven private inholdings. The private inholdings are concentrated mostly in a ten mile stretch of the West Fork Bruneau River Canyon below Black Rock Crossing. The unit's configuration resembles an inverted "V", with each stem of the "V" 20 miles long and four miles wide. The unit is located 45 miles south of Bruneau and 15 miles southeast of Grasmere. The unit is dominated by the deep vertical-walled canyons of the Jarbidge River and the West Fork of the Bruneau River. These canyons cut through a relatively flat plateau region covered with northern desert shrubs. The canyon bottoms are vegetated by juniper, willow and tall shrubs and grasses.

NATURALNESS:

The imprints of man in the Jarbidge River stem (eastern stem) of the unit are limited to a network of ways and range developments (stock ponds and fences) in the southernmost plateau portion and several widely scattered dead-end ways, small reservoirs and short fence lines on the plateau regions around the periphery of the unit. The concentration of ways and range developments in the southwest portion are such that they impair the natural character of an area over 7,000 acres. In addition, a dead-end road and reservoir in the northwest portion of the stem should be eliminated from the unit. The remainder of the eastern stem including the canyon of the Jarbidge River appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprints of man absent or so widely scattered that they are substantially unnoticeable.

The imprints of man in the West Fork Bruneau River stem (western stem) of the unit include three low-standard roads leading from the western boundary of the unit to private and state lands within the canyon. These roads should be eliminated from the unit. Another road cuts across the southeast tip of the stem and isolates about 900 acres. The naturalness of an area of about 1,300 acres in the southwest periphery is impaired by a concentration of seven miles of ways and should be dropped from further consideration. There are also about 25 miles of ways and substantial livestock trails in the plateau region in the eastern half of the stem. This concentration of ways in the eastern periphery of the stem impairs the natural character of the land, such that 9,200 acres should also be trimmed from further consideration. The remainder of the western stem of the unit, including the canyon of the West Fork Bruneau River, appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprints of man absent or so widely scattered that they are substantially unnoticeable.

SOLITUDE:

The dominance of low shrubby vegetation over much of the unit offers minimal vegetative screening. Only in the riparian zones of the canyon bottoms is vegetative screening good to excellent. The deep, meandering, vertical-walled canyons of the Jarbidge and West Fork Bruneau River offer excellent topographic screening. Though the canyons tend to concentrate visitors into narrow corridors of use and increase the potential of visitor contacts, the meandering character of the canyons coupled with good to excellent vegetative screening would minimize visual contacts between visitor groups.

The large size of the Jarbidge River stem of the unit combined with excellent topographic and vegetative screening in portions of the stem affords outstanding opportunities for solitude. Only a narrow strip of land lying between two medium-standard roads in the southeast corner of the stem should be trimmed from further consideration because the narrow configuration does not offer opportunities for solitude.

The West Fork Bruneau River stem (western stem) of the unit is also considered to offer outstanding opportunities for solitude for the same reasons expressed in the previous discussion. However, less than 50% of the land base along the southern 2/3 of the canyon bottom which contributes to the outstanding opportunities for solitude is public land. Excluding the non-federal lands from consideration results in a very broken land pattern on which to evaluate wilderness characteristics. Because of this, the opportunities for solitude on public lands within the canyon are considered to be less than outstanding. In addition, the relatively flat, open, natural portions of the western stem are not considered to offer outstanding opportunities for solitude. Therefore, much of the western stem, an area totalling 17,270 acres, should be trimmed from further consideration.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The primitive recreation opportunities in the unit are primarily associated with the river canyons and include camping, backpacking, river running, nature photography, sightseeing, fishing and hunting. The recreational opportunities are generally considered outstanding because of the large size of the unit and the exceptional and unusual natural features and recreational attractions of the river canyons. However, less than 50% of the land base along the southern 2/3 of the canyon bottom of the West Fork Bruneau River (western stem of unit) which contributes to the outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation is public land. Excluding the non-federal lands from consideration results in a very broken land pattern on which to evaluate wilderness characteristics. Because of this very broken land pattern, the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation on public lands within the canyon are considered to be less than outstanding. In addition, the flat, open plateau in the western stem of the unit lacks any exceptional or unusual recreational attractions. Therefore, much of the western stem of the unit, an area totalling 17,270 acres, should be trimmed from further consideration.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The Bruneau and Jarbidge River Canyons are of exceptional scenic value. The unit contains excellent bighorn sheep habitat and important mule deer winter range. Otter and red-banded trout, sensitive species, inhabit the rivers. The Bruneau River and Jarbidge River are currently under consideration by Congress for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System.

REHABILITATION:

A portion of the unit is sufficiently natural to qualify as a Wilderness Study Area. However, it may be possible to further reduce the imprints of man from portions of the unit by hand labor or natural regeneration. Rehabilitation potential will be considered in detail during the study phase of the wilderness review process.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that opposed a study area gave the following specific reasons:

- The unit is not natural because of extensive grazing, range improvements and rock monuments throughout.
- The unit does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude because of the confinement of visitors to the canyon bottoms.
- The unit does not offer outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation because of the confinement of visitors to canyon bottoms and because the area is dangerous.

Comments in support of a study area included the following specific reasons:

- The unit has very few roads; those that are there should be used for wilderness access.
- The unit is natural because usage is limited; there are some zones of imprints that need rehabilitation and close administration.
- The unit has outstanding opportunities for solitude because of size, lack of external influences and the long meandering character of the canyons which mitigates the corridor effect of the canyons.
- The unit has outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation because of the diversity of high quality activities including hiking, floating and fishing.
- The unit has outstanding supplemental values including wildlife, historic, geological and scenic values.
- The majority of those supporting a study area wanted it to include the West Fork of the Bruneau River (western stem of unit). The primary reason stated for this inclusion was outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, as well as excellent wildlife values, in an area of uncompromised naturalness. To exclude the area because of private or state inholdings is not justified without further study.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

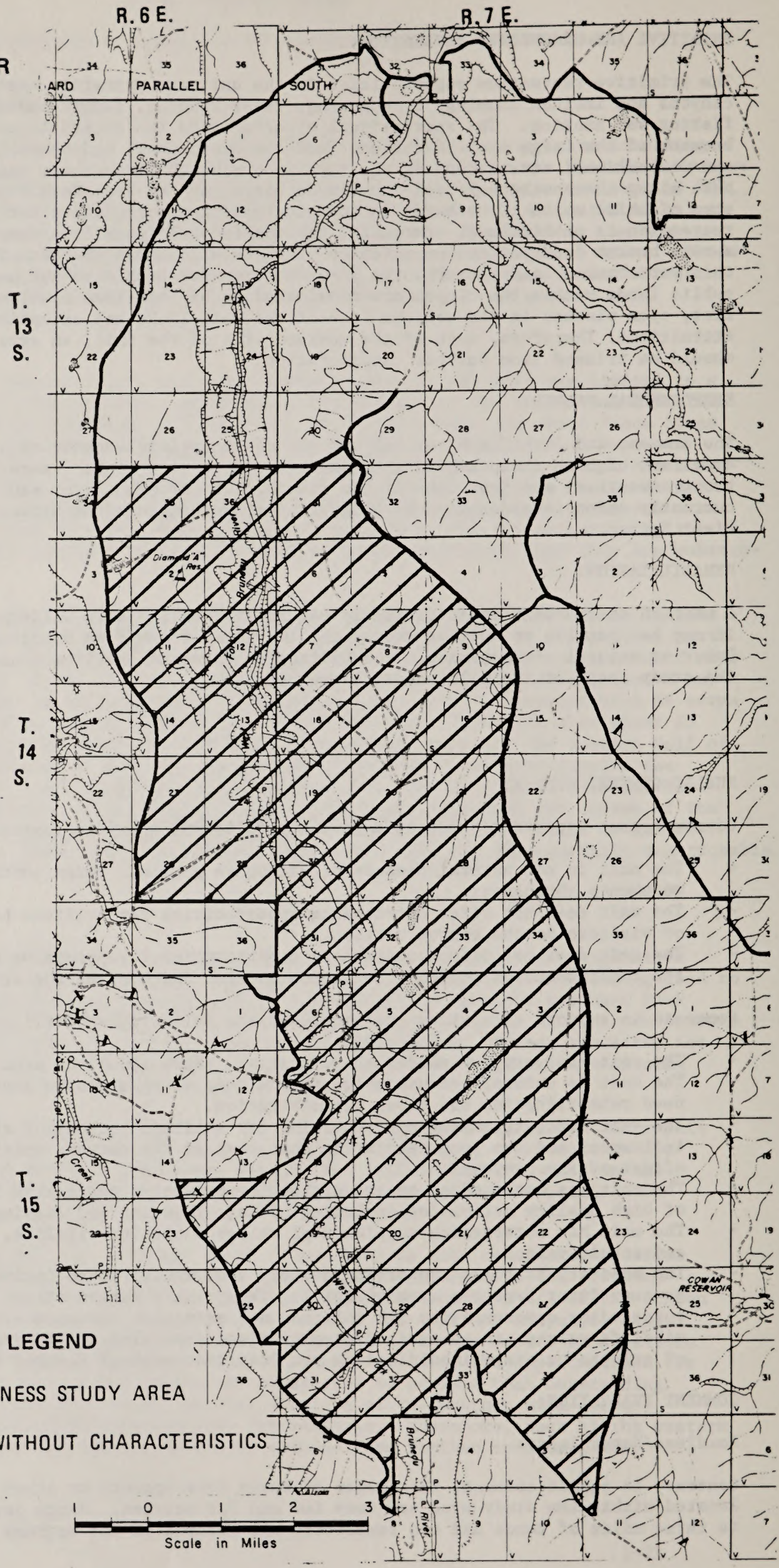
Roadless/Naturalness:

Contrary to public comment, the number of range developments or other imprints of man located within the study area are very few and far between. Range developments are limited to three miles of fence and two reservoirs all located in the extreme periphery of the unit.

17–11
JARBIDGE RIVER

WEST HALF





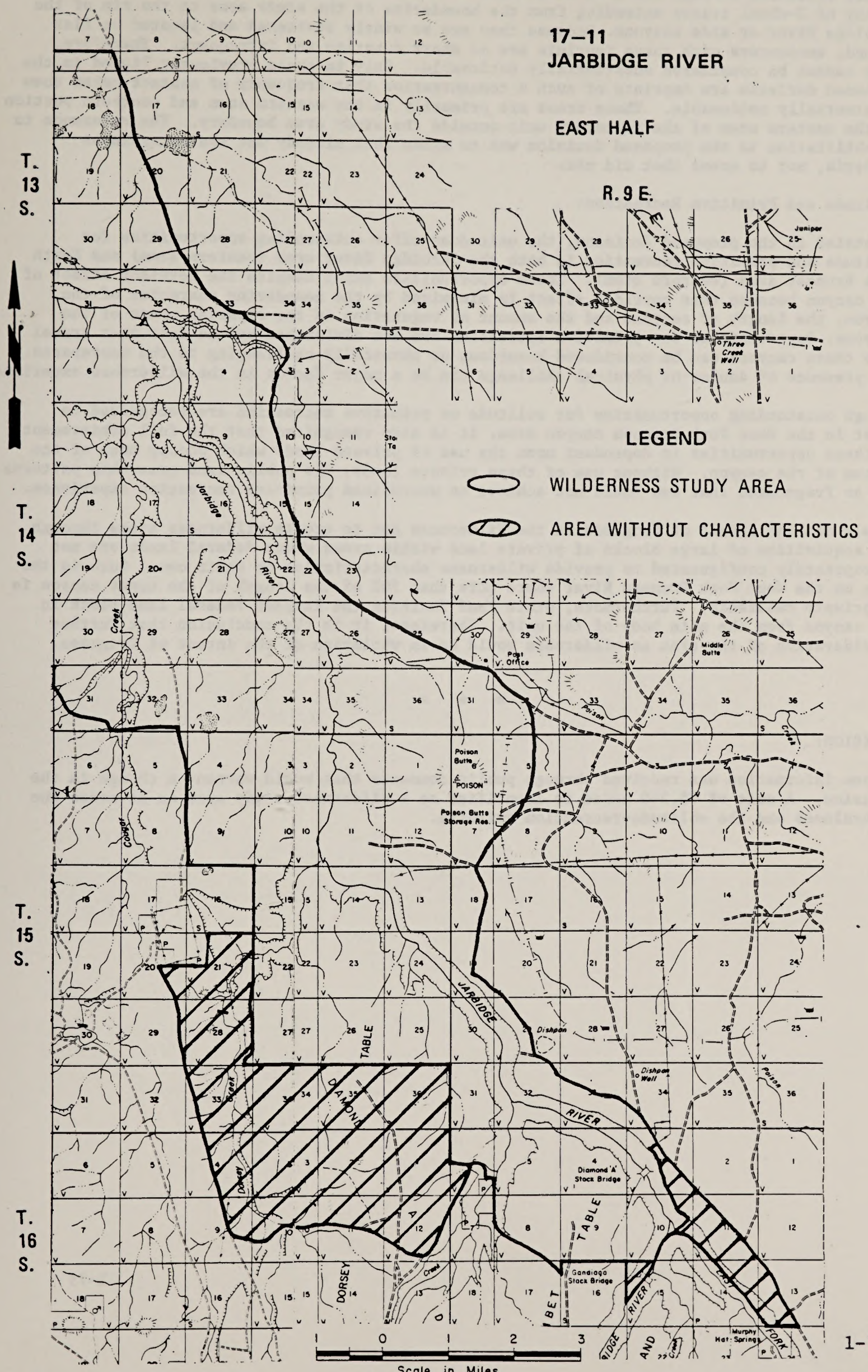
LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

17–11
JARBIDGE RIVER

EAST HALF



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

Other imprints of man are limited to about 14 miles of regularly discernable ways evenly and widely scattered through the unit at intervals of three or more miles. These ways consist mostly of 2-wheel tracks extending from the boundaries of the study area to the rim of the Jarbidge River or side canyons. Because they are so widely scattered and located on flat ground, encounters with these imprints are of short duration and infrequent. Therefore, they cannot be considered substantially noticeable. Only in areas previously listed in the proposed decision are imprints of such a concentration that frequency of contact makes them substantially noticeable. These areas are primarily in the western stem and southern portion of the eastern stem of the inventory unit outside the study area boundary. The reference to rehabilitation in the proposed decision was to areas that already met the naturalness criteria, not to areas that did not.

Solitude and Primitive Recreation:

As stated in the proposed decision, the unit does offer outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation in both the Jarbidge River area (eastern stem) and North Fork Bruneau area (western stem). These opportunities exist despite the corridor effect of the canyon because this corridor effect is minimized by the meandering character of the canyon, the length of canyons and the amount of vegetation in the riparian zones of the canyons. Opportunities for primitive recreation are not diminished by the fact that travel into these canyons can be considered hazardous or physically challenging to the unprepared. The presence of danger or physical challenge can be a major factor in the wilderness experience.

Though outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation are recognized to exist in the West Fork Bruneau canyon area, it is also recognized that the full achievement of these opportunities is dependent upon the use of private lands which occupy much of the bottom of the canyon. Without use of these private lands, the public land ownership patterns are so fragmented that one could not achieve an unconfined primitive recreation experience.

It was not the intent of Congress in the Wilderness Act to create wilderness areas through the acquisition of large blocks of private land within areas where federal lands are not appropriately configurated to provide wilderness characteristics on their own. Such is the case on the West Fork Bruneau River where more than 50% of the length of the upper canyon is in private ownership. Furthermore, state land isolates the largest federal land block in the canyon from the main body of the unit. Therefore, it is the conclusion that further consideration of the area as wilderness would be in violation of the intent of Congress.

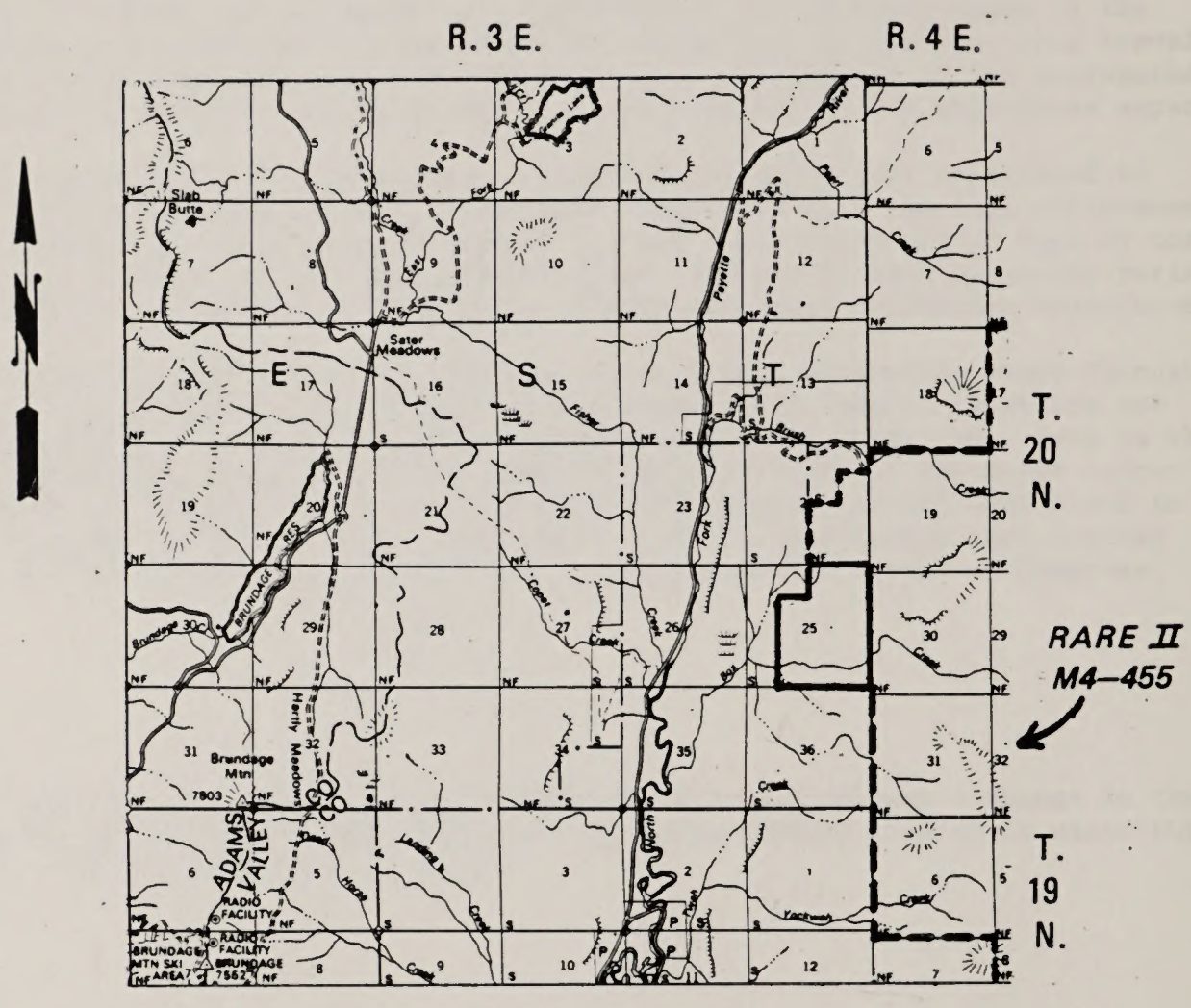
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DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 75,340 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

110- 91a

BOX CREEK



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

110-91a BOX CREEK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 428 acres of BLM land, contiguous to U.S. Forest Service Rare II area Lick Creek (M4-455, 61,470 acres), which has been recommended for wilderness. The unit is located five miles northeast of the Brundage Mountain Ski Area near McCall. The BLM unit is similar to the Forest Service area in landform and vegetation, consisting of rolling to extremely steep and broken terrain supporting mixed conifer forests of ponderosa, lodgepole and whitebark pine; white, Douglas and subalpine fir; spruce, larch and aspen. The forest cover is broken frequently by large granite outcrops. The chief drainage is Box Creek, flowing west through the BLM parcel.

NATURALNESS:

There appear to be no significant human imprints. The unit is substantially natural in character.

SOLITUDE:

When considered with the contiguous Forest Service area, the unit's size and excellent vegetative and topographic screening provide outstanding opportunities for solitude.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

When considered with the contiguous Forest Service area, the unit provides outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation including hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, backpacking, hiking, horseback riding, photography and challenging cross-country travel.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that specifically addressed unit 110-91a were largely limited to agreement or disagreement with the proposed decision without giving any specific reasons. Where characteristics were discussed, it was felt that the area was affected primarily by the forces of nature and offered outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation when considered in combination with contiguous Forest Service RARE II area. One comment pointed out that the unit did not meet the size criteria.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Public comment agreed that the area, as stated in the proposed decision, offers outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation when considered with RARE II area. The area does meet one of the size criteria options as stated in the BLM inventory policy.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 428 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness criteria, and when considered with the contiguous Forest Service area meets the size and the solitude-recreation criteria.

111-6 LITTLE JACK'S CREEK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 74,919 acres of BLM land with seven non-Federal inholdings. This acreage figure differs from the 80,054 acres shown in the August 1979 report due to a more accurate calculation of acreage. The unit is approximately twelve miles long and averages ten miles wide, and is located 20 miles south of Grand View. The unit consists of a level to rolling plateau cut by four major canyons: the East and West Forks of Shoofly Creek, Rattlesnake Creek and Little Jack's Creek. Little Jack's Creek Canyon is the dominant topographic feature, meandering through the eastern portion of the unit for fifteen miles. The canyons are typically deep, sheer-walled and narrow, and contain significant riparian vegetation. Outside the canyons, the unit is moderately dissected by shallow draws and is dominated by northern desert plant species.

NATURALNESS:

In the west-central portion of the unit, along the broad ridge between Shoofly and Little Jack's Creeks, are low-standard, dead-end roads extending into the body of the unit from the north and the south. A moderately substantial way extends into the unit from the southern dead-end road, providing direct access to three large reservoirs on the central plateau. This way-reservoir linear system nearly links the two dead-end roads. Geographic barriers have prevented vehicle access for about one mile in the northern portion of the system. The road fingers and way/reservoir system occurring between them are considered a substantial intrusion on naturalness. Wilderness characteristics have been evaluated in two subunits northwest and southeast of this system.

The western subunit contains 24,287 acres. It contains the East and West Forks of Shoofly Creek in the central portion; a broad ridge and breaks toward the creek canyons in the southeast; a rolling, moderately dissected plateau in the north; and Bald Mountain and its moderately sloping ridges in the southwest. There are five non-Federal inholdings. Human imprints include three stock ponds, a one-mile vehicle route and several livestock trails in the plateau and breaks region in the south and southeast portions; four miles of ways in the southwest portion, with three stock ponds on the edge of the unit in this area; and a short fence line and a short bladed livestock trail on the edge of the unit in the northern portion. The scattered nature of these imprints and their location mainly about the periphery of the unit render them substantially unnoticeable. The unit as a whole appears substantially natural in character.

The eastern subunit contains 50,632 acres. It contains the canyon system of Little Jack's Creek and its tributaries, including Rattlesnake Creek. The plateau lands outside the canyon are rolling and moderately well dissected by shallow drainages. There are two state inholdings.

In the southwestern portion of the subunit is a concentration of seventeen miles of ways and bladed fire lines, four miles of fence and five stock ponds. This area of 8,334 acres is not considered natural in character due to the extreme concentration of substantial imprints of man. In the western portion are five scattered stock ponds and three miles of ways. Because of the evenly scattered distribution of these imprints, they are not considered substantially noticeable and are effectively screened by low sagebrush vegetation even at close distances. The southern portion contains two roads, each two miles long, leading to spring developments; one development having a cabin. These roads are less than 3/4 miles apart. The roads and the land between, as well as the springs, should be trimmed from further consideration, an area of 1,012 acres. Other imprints in the unit include four miles of ways and one mile of fence. Because these imprints are so widely scattered and are not noticeable except at very close distances, they are not considered substantially noticeable in the unit as a whole. The central core of the unit, encompassing most of the canyon of Little Jack's Creek, is free of imprints. There a total of 41,286 acres appear to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature.

SOLITUDE:

The western subunit offers fair to good topographic screening in the area of the two forks of Shoofly Creek and the well-dissected terrain southeast of the East Fork Shoofly Creek. Vegetative screening is good within the two canyons. In the rest of the subunit, screening from vegetation and topography is poor and opportunities for solitude minimal. Relief within the major drainages provides moderately good opportunities for solitude. There are

nine miles of deeply eroded stream courses, but four private inholdings break the continuity of solitude within the drainages. There are moderately good opportunities for solitude due to the size of the subunit and the moderate relief associated with Shoofly Creek. However, these opportunities are not considered outstanding due to configurations associated with private ownership in the stream bottom and the minimal opportunities for solitude in the remainder of the subunit.

Vegetative screening is minimal in most of the eastern subunit, which is dominated by northern desert plant species. Within the canyons, riparian vegetation provides good screening. Topographic screening is poor to fair on the plateau and good to excellent in the deep, meandering canyon of Little Jack's Creek. The subunit's large size, good configuration and generally good screening afford outstanding opportunities for solitude, mainly associated with the canyon and canyon breaks areas. A narrow finger in the southeast portion is created by non-Federal ownership that extends into the body of the subunit. The portion of this finger east of Rattlesnake Creek, 143 acres, isolated from the body of the subunit, fails to satisfy the solitude-recreation criteria and should be eliminated from consideration.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The western subunit offers moderately good opportunities for hiking, horseback riding, hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing. The natural features of Shoofly Creek are considered significant attractions, but recreation opportunities are not considered outstanding. The broken ownership pattern fails to provide a continuous unconfined recreation experience, and natural features are not considered outstanding nor sufficiently unusual to provide an outstanding attraction for primitive recreation.

In the eastern subunit recreation opportunities include camping, hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, wildlife observation, fishing and photography. The primitive recreation opportunities are considered outstanding because of the exceptional natural features and recreation attractions, primarily associated with the canyons. Physical challenge associated with primitive recreation is considered significant.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The drainage of Shoofly Creek in the western subunit offers excellent habitat for red-banded trout, a sensitive species. The eastern subunit is considered to contain significant scenic value, associated with the canyon, and ecological values, including a bighorn sheep population, mule deer and antelope winter range, important sage grouse habitat, and a red-banded trout population.

REHABILITATION:

The eastern subunit is sufficiently natural in character to qualify as a Wilderness Study Area. However, it may be possible to further remove the imprints of man from portions of the subunit by hand labor or natural regeneration. Rehabilitation potential will be considered in detail during the study phase of the wilderness review process.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Of the comments specifically in support of a study area, many asked for a larger area of 65,500 which includes the Shoofly drainage. Others supported the proposed decision for an area of 41,143 acres. Specific reasons given included the following:

- The unit is quite natural in character and the imprints of man that exist are not obtrusive due to the unit's size and shape. Proposals for enlarging the area to include Shoofly Creek stated that the BLM arbitrarily isolated the Shoofly drainage from the Little Jack's drainage by drawing a boundary line along a faint jeep trail and livestock trail.
- Opportunities for solitude in the unit are outstanding because of the large size, lack of external influences, and configuration of meandering canyons and adjacent plateaus.
- Opportunities for primitive recreation in the unit are outstanding because of the attractive canyons and excellent hiking potential. The unit is close to the populated Boise valley and can be used year-round for recreation.
- Supplemental values mentioned include unique desert plant communities, archaeological sites, scenery, abundance of wildlife, and numerous caves available for shelter. Wildlife and scenery were the most frequently identified supplemental values.

Comments that expressed opposition to further wilderness consideration for the unit stated that the unit did not meet the roadless definition because the area was crossed by numerous roads, many of which were well traveled and man-made. In addition, it was felt the area was not natural because of the number of existing roads, fences, and water developments. Maps were provided showing imprints of man.

Additional specific reasons given for opposing study area identification included the following:

- Opportunities for solitude were not outstanding because of the open character of the area, frequent low-flying military jet aircraft operating in an east-west corridor across the unit, and regular patrol flights over a gas pipeline along the southeast boundary of the unit. The influence of low-flying aircraft was the most frequently stated reason for the lack of solitude.
- Opportunities for primitive recreation were not outstanding because of the hot, barren, and open nature of the region, and because of the lack of drinking water. One respondent indicated that the elderly and handicapped could not visit the area.
- An existing management plan specifying the development of a well and pipeline system seriously conflicts with further wilderness consideration of the unit. The well, which is already developed, would supply water to a pipeline and troughs proposed in the eastern portion of the unit.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

The maps supplied by those who felt the area was not roadless or natural were reviewed for previously uninventoried roads or other imprints of man. The maps showed four vehicle route systems within the area that were claimed to be roads which had been previously identified in the proposed decision as ways maintained solely by the passage of vehicles. All other vehicle routes shown on the maps were previously identified as roads and were used to delineate the study area boundary.

The four vehicle route systems were classified as ways because they show no sign of construction or maintenance by mechanical means, During the re-evaluation of these vehicle routes systems, it was determined that one of the systems does contain roads and the other three systems are ways.

The one vehicle route system determined to have some roads is in the northwest portion of the unit in the vicinity of Wickney Tree Reservoir and Shearing Corral Reservoir. The vehicle routes servicing these reservoirs from the western boundary of the unit show signs of construction along some portions of their length. They are readily passable and receive regular and continuous use. These roads, when classified as ways in the proposed decision, drew criticism from those who supported a study area expansion into Shoofly Creek because the vehicle routes were used as a means of separating the Shoofly Creek drainage from the Little Jack's Creek drainage. In the proposed decision, the vehicle routes were considered a significant linear intrusion that justified dividing the unit. These vehicle routes, now known to be roads, are still considered to be a significant linear intrusion over much of their length.

Closer on the ground inventory indicated that the livestock trail running north from Shearing Corral Reservoir to the northern cherry stem road is not a significant linear intrusion. This route is considered a livestock trail because there are no established 2-wheel tracks that indicate regular passage of vehicles. In addition, the northern portion of the cherry stem road leading to the reservoir consists of two light tracks on a broken rock surface with no wheel rutting. The lack of wheel rutting and minimal vegetation in the area does not make this road any sort of significant scar upon the landscape either from a distance or while standing upon it.

Because the livestock trail between Shearing Corral Reservoir and the northern cherry stem road is not judged to be a significant linear intrusion, the Shoofly Creek drainage should not be separated from the Little Jack's Creek drainage because of impaired naturalness.

The vehicle route from Shearing Corral Reservoir to a reservoir to the south is still considered a way because there is no sign of construction or maintenance. This way apparently does receive significant use which is often not confined to a 2-wheel track. In several places it has become multi-tracked both from vehicles and livestock trailing. Because of its multi-tracked character, it has a significant impact upon naturalness on a localized basis. The way is effectively screened by topography from distances of over 100 yards. There are no established 2-wheel tracks heading northward from the above described way to several reservoirs, only livestock trails.

The other three vehicle route systems are still considered ways because they show no sign of construction or maintenance by mechanical means. They are typified by 2-wheel tracks crossing relatively flat terrain with well established vegetation growing between the tracks over much of their length.

As stated in the proposed decision, both the Little Jack's Creek and Shoofly Creek drainages appear natural in character because the imprints of man are few and so widely scattered over relatively flat terrain (with only extremely localized impacts) that they cannot be considered substantially noticeable in the unit as a whole. Encounters with any imprints of man are extremely brief and infrequent. A visitor can walk for days within these areas, particularly in the Little Jack's Creek drainage, and encounter few if any visible signs of man's work.

The reference to rehabilitation in the proposed decision was to areas that already met the naturalness criteria, not to areas that did not.

Solitude:

The primary reason given for opposition to the proposed decision was that frequent low-flying military aircraft impact solitude. These aircraft have an impact on solitude as well as naturalness. However, the low-level flights are considered temporary impacts. If through the planning process it is recommended that this unit be designated wilderness, the BLM could negotiate with the Air Force to alter the course of the low-level flights to eliminate their impact.

It is generally recognized that the lack of topography and tall vegetation does limit opportunities to achieve solitude unless the area involved is large. Low vegetation on flat terrain can provide excellent screening if the area is large enough to allow other visitors or external influences (vehicles on boundary roads) to blend or disappear into the landscape. The Little Jack's Creek subunit is large enough to allow a number of user groups and external influences to blend into the landscape.

Not only does large size in combination with low vegetation provide sufficient screening, it also provides a sense of remoteness or vastness to an area, adding to the solitude experience. In the Little Jack's Creek subunit, the vast flat landscape is dissected by deep narrow meandering canyons and draws which add to the sense of remoteness. These canyons offer 30 miles of excellent topographic screening. Therefore, the large size of the unit in combination with the topographic screening of the canyons affords outstanding opportunities for solitude.

The proposed decision determined that the Shoofly Creek subunit had opportunities for solitude but they were judged not to be outstanding because of the unit's size and minimal vegetative screening. During the reevaluation of this unit it was felt that the lack of tall vegetation does have a negative effect upon solitude because of the lack of sufficient flat topography to achieve the blending or vastness effect previously discussed. However, the canyons of Shoofly Creek in combination with the highly broken topography in much of the unit provide numerous pockets of isolation where visitors can escape contact with others. In addition, the V-shaped character of the Shoofly Creek Canyon and side draws permit one to readily escape onto surrounding highly dissected topography, thereby greatly diminishing the potential for a corridor effect.

The lack of a significant corridor effect in the main canyons combined with the highly broken topographic character of the subunit provides outstanding opportunities for solitude in a concentrated area at the core of the subunit.

Steep topography combined with a lack of vegetation causes the intrusion of significant external influences into large portions of the western periphery of the subunit. The topography of the western periphery of the unit slopes steeply downward toward Mud Flat Road (one of the most heavily used roads in the area), making this road and traffic on it highly visible. In the western finger of the unit, topography in combination with narrow configuration allows for even greater external influences from major boundary roads. The western finger comprising 3,150 acres is trimmed from further consideration because of the clear and obvious lack of solitude (due to external influences) as well as a lack of primitive recreation (due to configuration as stated in the recreation narrative). In addition, the majority of the imprints of man found in the subunit are in this area.

Significant external influences from Mud Flat Road are also present in the gently sloping terrain of the northernmost portion of the subunit because of insufficient topographic and vegetative screening. Visual contact with traffic on Mud Flat Road is inescapable over much of this area which clearly and obviously limits solitude as well as a sense of primitive recreation. This area of 4,240 acres is also trimmed from further consideration.

Though solitude on the remainder of the western periphery is clearly lacking due to Mud Flat Road, the opportunities for primitive recreation are not. Therefore, the west-central periphery is not trimmed.

Private land ownership in the upper and lower portions of the Shoofly Creek canyons does not present a problem for solitude in the central portion of the unit.

Primitive Recreation:

The opportunity to achieve quality primitive recreation experiences is dependent upon a unit's size and ability to provide exceptional or unusual natural features or recreation attractions. Exceptional natural features are those which provide exceptional scenery, diversity in landform and/or mobility of travel for a visitor, and would result in a strong recreation attraction to an area for one or more types of activities.

The exceptional scenic beauty of Little Jack's Creek Subunit and the diversity of landform combined with the large size of the unit provides for outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation. The mobility of travel within the subunit is somewhat restricted or confined by the steep canyon walls of Little Jack's Creek. However, several major side drainages combined with the length of the main canyon diminish the sense of confinement.

The natural features of the Shoofly Creek Subunit are considered scenic but not exceptionally so. However, the topography of the canyon permits easy access from the canyon to surrounding scenic and diverse landforms. Within much of the central portion of the unit, a visitor can find a variety of landforms compacted into a relatively small area. Because of the ease of mobility (no sense of confinement) and the diversity of landforms concentrated in a small area, the opportunities for primitive recreation are considered outstanding.

Only in the western finger of the unit is a visitor confined by topography and configuration. This portion is trimmed from further consideration because of an obvious lack of primitive and unconfined recreation as well as a lack of solitude.

Though not confined by topography or configuration, a visitor to the northern portion of the unit is subjected to significant external influences from Mud Flat Road. Though external influences primarily affect solitude, they also limit the sense of primitive recreation or the escape from man's developments. Therefore, this area is trimmed from further consideration because of an obvious lack of solitude and primitive recreation.

A hot and dry environment does not preclude the opportunity to have an outstanding recreation experience if one is prepared; it adds to the physical challenge of the experience. Palatable drinking water and heat are not serious limitations to using this area if visits are conducted at the right time of the year and water sources are chemically treated and/or boiled. Sufficient water supplies can be readily carried across plateau areas between canyons. The diversity between exceptionally scenic, narrow canyons and vast plateau regions offers outstanding opportunities for challenging hiking.

Conflicting Resource Values:

The plan to construct a water pipeline system in the eastern plateau region of the Little Jack's Subunit was recinded when a serious conflict between wildlife values and livestock values was identified. Because of this conflict, the implementation of the pipeline plan will not take place until the completion of the Bruneau planning effort. The conflict between this pipeline and wildlife values as well as wilderness values will be assessed to determine if the pipeline plan should be implemented.

* * *

DECISION:

Due to public comment and additional field evaluation, 16,897 acres of the acreage originally recommended to be dropped in the proposed decision are now considered to have wilderness characteristics. An area of 58,040 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

R. 1 E.

R. 2 E.

111–6

LITTLE JACK'S CREEK

R. 3 E.

T. 8 S.

T. 9 S.

LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

Scale in Miles

1-83

III-7c BIG JACK'S CREEK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 65,134 acres of BLM land, in an irregularly shaped area 4½ -7½ miles by nine miles, with two private and five state inholdings. It is located 25 miles southwest of Bruneau. The unit lies on a flat to gently rolling plateau sharply dissected by seven meandering, vertical-walled canyons, the major drainage being that of Big Jack's Creek. Vegetation is dominated by northern desert shrub species with heavy riparian vegetation along the canyon bottoms.

NATURALNESS:

The eastern periphery of the unit contains a number of ways and bladed fire lines, the most prominent penetrating into the unit two miles. One bladed fire line system in the northeast portion of the unit is considered a significant scar. An east-west fence line also extends from the eastern boundary to Big Jack's Canyon in the northeast portion of the unit. Five ways penetrate into the unit as much as five miles from the western and southern boundaries to the canyon rims. A number of small stock ponds are scattered around the periphery of the unit in association with the intruding ways and roads.

Because of the flatness of the terrain on which the imprints occur, most are considered substantially unnoticeable except at close distances. As a whole, the unit appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature. In the eastern periphery of the unit 3,926 acres should be trimmed from further consideration because of very noticeable bladed fire lines or ways which, in association with state land, isolate these acres from the remainder of the unit.

SOLITUDE:

The dominance of low shrubby vegetation affords minimal vegetative screening over much of the unit. Only in the heavy riparian vegetation of the canyon bottoms is vegetative screening good to excellent. Topographic screening is minimal on the plateaus. However, the numerous, deep, meandering canyons dissecting the plateau offer excellent topographic screening over much of the unit. In addition, the dispersion of canyon systems over the unit would tend to distribute use more evenly and reduce visitor contacts. The large size of the unit combined with excellent dispersion potential affords outstanding opportunities for solitude. Only in the southern portion, where intruding boundary roads in conjunction with state and private lands cause a narrow confining configuration are opportunities for solitude limited. These areas, totalling 6,375 acres, should be trimmed from further consideration.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive recreational opportunities within the unit are primarily associated with the canyons and include camping, backpacking, nature photography, sightseeing, wildlife viewing, hunting, and fishing. The recreational opportunities are generally considered to be outstanding because of the exceptional or unusual natural features and recreational attractions in the canyons. Only in the southernmost portion where the canyons are shallow are opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation considered less than outstanding because of the narrow confining configuration resulting from intruding boundary roads and state and private lands. These acres should be trimmed from further consideration as indicated in the solitude narrative.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The deep meandering canyons of the unit are of exceptional scenic value. Red-banded trout, a sensitive species, are found in limited numbers in the Big Jack's Creek drainage. The unit contains potential bighorn sheep habitat and some antelope winter range.

REHABILITATION:

A portion of the unit is sufficiently natural in character to qualify as a Wilderness Study Area. However, it may be possible to further remove the imprints of man from portions of the unit by hand labor or natural regeneration. Rehabilitation potential will be considered in detail during the study phase of the wilderness review process.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Of the comments in support of a study area, most were in favor of identifying 54,800 acres as in the proposed decision, with two asking for an expansion of the area to the south. Specific reasons given for supporting study area identification included the following:

- The unit is quite natural in appearance because imprints of man were few and widely scattered over a large area with good shape or configuration.
- Opportunities for solitude in the unit are outstanding because of the sense of remoteness on the large plateau areas, the meandering character of the canyons and the absence of external influences.
- Opportunities for primitive recreation in the unit are outstanding because of the attractive recreation features of the canyons and the diversity of recreation opportunities on both the plateau and in the canyons, including hiking, hunting and photography (hiking opportunities being the activity most frequently mentioned).
- The unit has exceptional or outstanding supplemental values, including outstanding scenery, wildlife values (bighorn sheep, mule deer, antelope, sage grouse and redbanded trout habitat), geological values, and unique desert plant communities. Supplemental values (particularly scenic and wildlife values) were the most frequently stated reasons for identifying the unit as a study area.

All of those opposed to further wilderness consideration for the unit felt that the unit did not meet the roadless definition because the area was covered or criscrossed with roads, many of which were well traveled and man-made. In addition, the majority of the comments stated that the unit was not natural because of the number of existing roads, fences and water developments. Maps were provided showing roads and other imprints of man.

Additional specific reasons given for opposing study area identification included the following:

- Opportunities for solitude were not outstanding because of the open character of most of the unit, the lack of sufficient vegetative screening, and frequent low-flying military aircraft operating in an east-west corridor through the middle of the unit. The influence of low-flying aircraft was the most frequently stated reason for the lack of solitude.

- Opportunities for primitive recreation were not outstanding because of the dry, flat and hot environment over much of the unit and the negative effect of vehicle traffic over nearby roads on a primitive hiking experience.
- An existing management plan specifying the development of a well and pipeline system seriously conflicts with further wilderness consideration of the unit. The well, which is already built, would supply water to the western plateau regions via a pipeline which has yet to be built.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

The maps supplied by those who felt that the area was not roadless or natural were reviewed for previously uninventoried roads or other imprints of man. The maps showed six vehicle routes within the study area that are claimed to be roads which had been previously identified in the proposed decision as ways maintained solely by the passage of vehicles. All other vehicle routes shown on the maps were previously identified as roads in the proposed decision and were used to delineate the boundary.

The six vehicle routes identified within the study area were classified as ways because they clearly and obviously show no sign of construction or maintenance by mechanical means. In all cases, these ways are 2-wheel tracks crossing relatively flat open plateau country with sagebrush vegetation growing between the tracks. In one case, the way has been so infrequently traveled in recent years that the wheel tracks have all but been obliterated by vegetative growth over much of its length. In another case, the wheel tracks of the way lying north of Big Jack's Creek canyon in the center of the unit become increasingly less noticeable as one travels from the western boundary eastward to the canyon of Big Jack's Creek. The other ways located in the northern and southern portions of the unit have well established wheel tracks over much of their length, but damage to vegetation between the wheel tracks by the passage of vehicles is generally limited.

Because of the location of these ways on relatively flat ground, they generally cannot be seen except when standing on or very close to them. Likewise, the impact of water developments or fences is extremely localized. Encounters with any imprints of man are extremely brief and very infrequent due to the wide dispersal of the imprints. A visitor can walk for days within this unit and encounter few if any visible signs of man's work. Therefore, the imprints of man cannot be considered substantially noticeable. The reference to rehabilitation in the proposed decision was to areas that already met the naturalness criteria, not to areas that did not.

Solitude:

The primary reason given for opposition to the proposed decision was that frequent low-flying military aircraft impact solitude. It is agreed that these aircraft have an impact upon the achievement of solitude as well as a sense of naturalness. However, these low-level flights are considered temporary impacts. If through the study process it is recommended that this unit be designated wilderness, the BLM could negotiate with the Air Force to alter the course of these low-level flights to eliminate their impact.

It is generally recognized that the lack of topography and tall vegetation does limit the opportunity to achieve solitude unless the area involved is large. Low vegetation on flat terrain can provide excellent screening if given a large enough area to allow other visitors or external influences (vehicles on boundary roads) to blend or disappear into the landscape. This unit is large enough to allow a number of user groups or external influences to blend into the landscape. Only in narrowly configured areas such as those excluded to the south of the study area boundary can sufficient blending of external influences not be achieved.

Not only does large size in combination with low vegetation provide sufficient screening, it also provides a sense of remoteness or vastness to an area, adding to the solitude experience. In this unit, the vast flat landscape is frequently dissected by deep, narrow, meandering draws and canyons which add to the sense of remoteness. These canyons offer over 50 miles of excellent topographic screening as well as aid in dispersing visitors over a number of different isolated plateau areas within the unit. Therefore, the large size of the unit in combination with the dispersion potential of the canyons and topographic screening of the canyons affords outstanding opportunities for solitude.

Primitive Recreation:

The opportunity to achieve quality primitive recreation experiences is dependent upon a unit's size and ability to provide exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions. Exceptional natural features are those which provide exceptional scenery, diversity of landform and/or mobility of travel for a visitor, and would result in a strong recreation attraction to an area for one or more types of activities.

The exceptional scenic beauty of the Big Jack's Creek canyon and adjoining canyons and the diversity of landform between canyons and plateaus combined with the large size of the unit affords outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation. The steep canyon of Big Jack's Creek can give a sense of confinement to the visitor. However, the number of miles of canyon, as well as the numerous side canyons available for escape onto the plateaus, greatly diminish this sense of confinement and give a visitor mobility throughout the unit.

A hot and dry desert environment does not preclude the opportunity to have an outstanding recreation experience if one is prepared, it adds to the physical challenge of the experience. Palitable drinking water and heat are not a serious limitation to using this area if visits are conducted at the right time of the year and water sources within the canyons are chemically treated and/or boiled. Sufficient water supplies can be readily carried across plateau areas between canyons.

Conflicting Resource Values:

The plan to construct a water pipeline system in the western plateau region of the unit was recinded when a serious conflict between wildlife values and livestock values was identified. Because of this conflict, the implementation of the pipeline plan will not take place until the completion of the Bruneau planning effort. The conflict between this pipeline and wildlife values as well as wilderness values will be assessed to determine if the pipeline plan should be implemented.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 54,833 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

111–7c
BIG JACK'S CREEK

R. 2 E.

R. 3 E.

R. 4 E.

T. 8 S.

T. 9 S.

T. 10 S.

T. 11 S.

LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

1-87

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 134,062 acres of BLM land in a long irregular configuration, 37 miles long and from 1/2 to 13 miles wide with nine state inholdings. The heart of the unit is located 15 miles northeast of Grasmere. The unit lies on a relatively flat volcanic tableland sharply dissected by the major drainages of the Bruneau River, East Fork Bruneau River, and Sheep Creek. The drainages are typified by deep vertical-walled canyons with numerous spires, columns, and large flaring cracks. The bottoms of these canyons vary in width from 30 feet to over one-quarter of a mile. The vertical walls of the canyons reach as much as 800 feet in height. Vegetation is dominated by northern desert shrub communities with juniper occurring in the canyon bottoms.

NATURALNESS:

The northwestern portion of the unit is crisscrossed with numerous ways, a bladed fence line, and a low-standard road. The northern neck downstream from the confluence of the Bruneau River and the East Fork of the Bruneau River has a number of ways penetrating from both the east and west boundaries to the rim of the canyon. The mid-eastern periphery of the unit contains a concentration of ways and low-standard roads just south of the confluence of the Bruneau River and the East Fork of the Bruneau River. The southeast periphery has several short dead-end low-standard roads, ways, fence lines and stock reservoirs. The southwest and mid-south portions also have a number of ways penetrating to the rim of the canyons from the west and south boundaries.

Despite the number of man's imprints much of the unit appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature. The large size of the unit, the wide distribution of the imprints and the lack of topographic relief in affected areas (which permits low sagebrush vegetation to effectively screen the imprints of man from short distances) renders the imprints substantially unnoticeable except where they are highly concentrated: in the plateau regions in the northernmost portion of the unit, the eastern periphery of the unit south of the confluence of the Bruneau River with the East Fork Bruneau River, between Sheep Creek and the Bruneau River in the southernmost portion of the unit, and northwest of the confluence of Sheep Creek with the Bruneau River. These concentrations of roads, ways, and range developments should be trimmed from further consideration. In addition, a substantial way running northeast-southwest through the plateau region in the western portion of the unit cuts off about 7,680 acres of land. This way is considered a significant linear intrusion. Because of the lack of outstanding opportunities on the plateau to the west of the way, the acreage should be trimmed from further consideration.

SOLITUDE:

The low shrubby vegetation dominating the unit offers minimal vegetative screening. The juniper and riparian vegetation in the canyon bottom offers fair to good vegetative screening. The flat terrain of much of the unit also offers only minimal topographic screening. However, the deep, meandering, vertical-walled canyons of the Bruneau, East Fork Bruneau, and Sheep Creek offer excellent topographic screening in narrow corridors running the entire length of the unit. Because of the scenic quality of these canyons, they would tend to concentrate visitors within the narrow corridor and increase the potential for visitor contacts. Despite the general lack of vegetative screening and the corridor effect of the canyon, the large size of the unit combined with the length of the canyons and their excellent topographic screening affords outstanding opportunities for solitude.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive recreation opportunities within the unit are primarily associated with the Bruneau River Canyon and Sheep Creek Canyon, and include whitewater rafting and kayaking, backpacking, camping, sightseeing, nature photography, rock hounding, fishing, and wildlife viewing. The recreational opportunities are considered outstanding because of the exceptional and unusual natural features and recreational attractions in the Bruneau River and Sheep Creek Canyons. There is significant mental and physical challenge associated with whitewater and backpacking opportunities within the canyons.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The Bruneau River and Sheep Creek canyon are of exceptional scenic and geological value. The Bruneau River and Sheep Creek have cut deep and extremely narrow vertical-walled canyons into an uplifted volcanic tableland. Perhaps nowhere else in the United States can be found canyons of this magnitude that are so narrow in relation to their depth and possess such numerous and diversified rock formations. Scenic vistas from the rims of the canyons

are breathtaking. The Bruneau River Canyon is also of exceptional scientific and cultural value with over 200 known pre-historic sites in the canyon. The Bruneau River and Sheep Creek are currently under consideration by Congress for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System. The unit contains red-banded trout and otter habitat, important mule deer winter range and potential bighorn sheep habitat.

REHABILITATION:

A large portion of the unit is sufficiently natural in character to qualify as a Wilderness Study Area. However, it may be possible to further remove the imprints of man from portions of the unit by hand labor or natural regeneration. Rehabilitation potential will be considered in detail during the study phase of the wilderness review process.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Of the comments received that specifically addressed Unit 111-17, over 80% were in support of the proposed decision to identify the unit as a study area and the remainder against further consideration of the unit as wilderness.

Of the comments supporting a study area, most were in favor of an area of 107,020 acres as in the proposed decision, while several recommended including 27,042 acres which had been dropped from wilderness consideration. Specific reasons given for supporting study area identification included the following:

- The large size and few influences make this spectacular canyon and river system and surrounding lands an outstanding natural area. The few light ways in the area would be naturally reclaimed once the area is closed to motorized use.

- Opportunities for solitude are outstanding due to the size, lack of external influences, and canyons.

- Opportunities for primitive recreation are outstanding due to the diverse wilderness activities available (hiking, fishing, river floating). The unit is relatively close to Idaho's largest population and can be used year-round for recreation.

- The unit has exceptional or outstanding supplemental values, including unique geological features, fantastic scenery, great variety of wildlife, and many archaeological and historical sites. Wildlife values, geological features, and scenery were the most frequently mentioned supplemental reasons for identifying the unit as a study area.

Those who opposed any further wilderness consideration gave the following reasons:

- Fences, roads, and livestock water developments are noticeable; it would be difficult to erase these signs of man's impact.

- Solitude is only available in the canyons, and solitude in the northern part of the unit is disrupted by low flying jets from Mountain Home Air Force Base and by the use of flares by the Air Force during the night.

- The unit is very dangerous for recreation use and can be utilized only by young, strong individuals. Drinking water is very scarce.

- Large areas have been included which are not pertinent or adjacent to the canyons. The area should be left alone and managed under multiple use with livestock management on the flats and canyons.

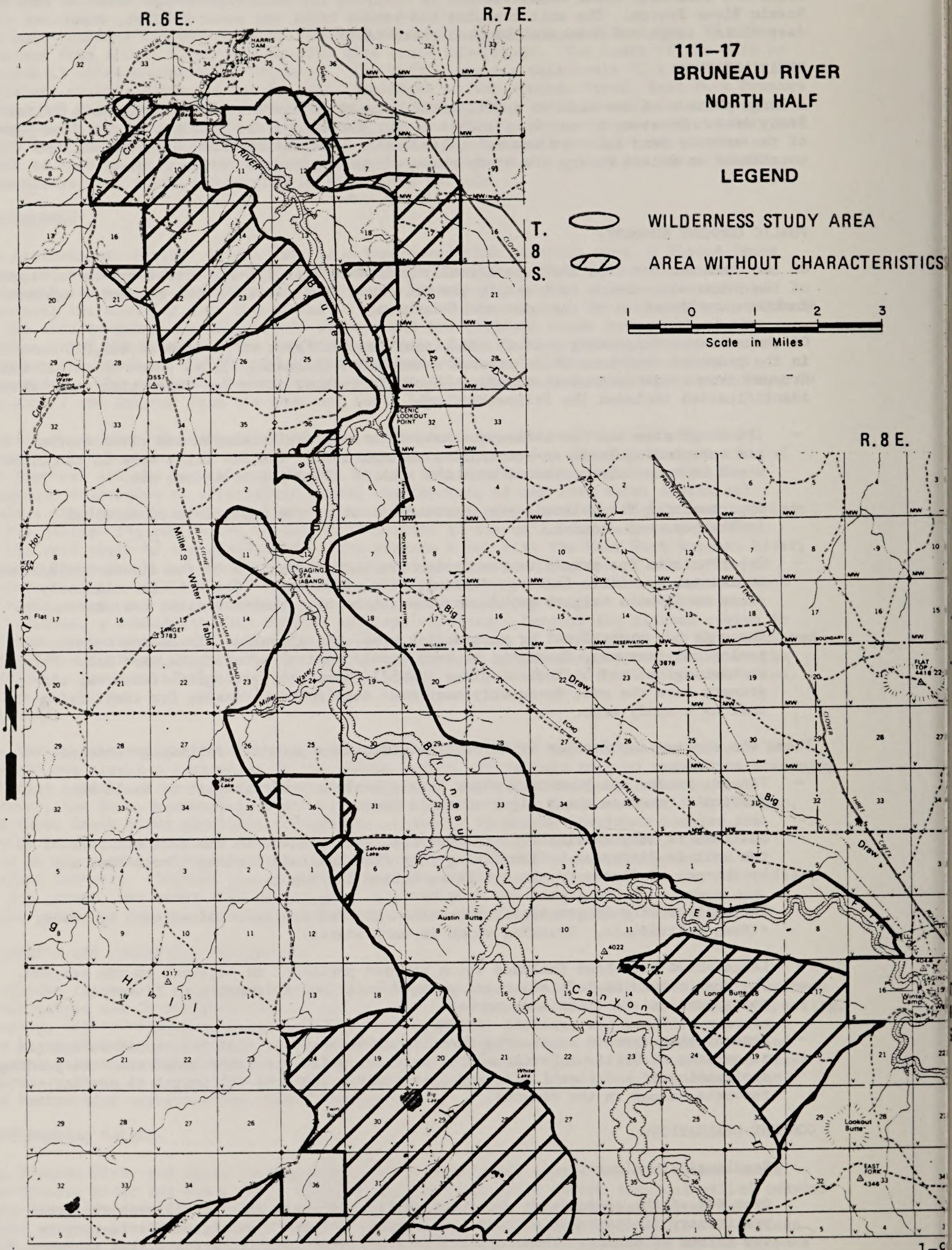
- Several that opposed study area identification proposed that the canyon be managed as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern, while one recommended that the pending designation of a National Wild and Scenic River would be sufficient to protect resource values in the canyons.

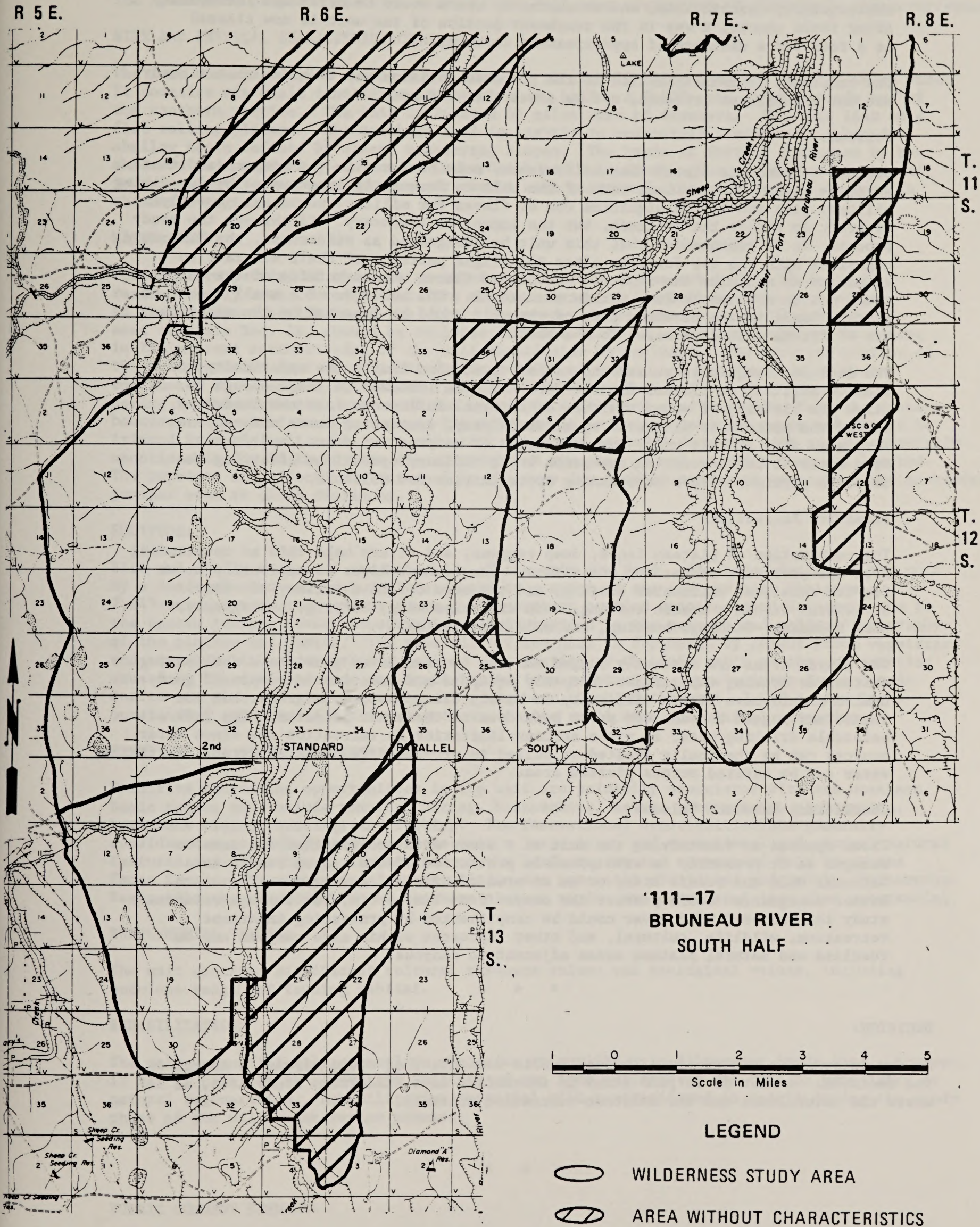
COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

Over 80% of the respondents who specifically addressed Unit 111-17 supported the preliminary finding that 107,020 acres appear to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature. Those opposed to study area identification stated that

111–17
BRUNEAU RIVER
NORTH HALF





111–17
BRUNEAU RIVER
SOUTH HALF

1 0 1 2 3 4 5
Scale in Miles

LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1–91

there are several roads, fences, and livestock water developments in the unit. These vehicle routes have been field-checked by the BLM and identified as ways rather than roads because they show no sign of construction or maintenance by mechanical means and are 2-wheel tracks with vegetation between the tracks. The imprints of man are so widely distributed over a large area that they are substantially unnoticeable, and encounter by users would be brief and infrequent. After field checks, a way in the southwest portion of the unit is now classed as a road for a distance of approximately three miles.

The reference to rehabilitation in the proposed decision was to areas that already met the naturalness criteria, not to areas that did not.

Solitude:

Several respondents stated that solitude can only be found in the canyons and that solitude within the northern part of the unit is frequently interrupted by low-flying military jets and by the nighttime use of flares for military purposes. Low-flying aircraft do effect the solitude, but the impact is temporary. If through the study process, it is recommended that this unit be designated as wilderness, the BLM could negotiate with the Air Force to alter the flight patterns of their aircraft to eliminate or minimize the impact. The use of flares occurs outside of the unit and would not be noticeable from within the canyon. The solitude of a small amount of plateau lands in the northern part of the unit would be impacted by the nighttime use of flares some five miles to the east.

The lack of topographic relief and taller vegetation limits the opportunity to achieve solitude on plateau lands unless the area involved is large enough to allow the blending of other visitors or external influences into the landscape, and/or the plateau is dissected by miles of deep, meandering draws and canyons. The large size of this unit, numerous miles of canyons and draws, and freedom from external influences (an exception being military operations affecting the northern portion) offers outstanding opportunities for solitude.

Primitive Recreation:

The combination of plateau lands, deep canyons, and rivers make this an outstanding area for primitive recreation activities. The Bruneau River is nationally known for its excellent whitewater boating, and the area offers a variety of other activities within a scenic setting, such as backpacking, camping, photography, rock hounding, fishing, hunting, and wildlife viewing.

The canyon areas are extremely rugged and the Bruneau River provides a challenging whitewater boating experience. Properly equipped and experienced people of good health should have little difficulty in safely using the canyon areas, but the remote and rugged terrain can prove hazardous to those not prepared. The lack of palatable drinking water is not a serious limitation to recreation use since water sources can be chemically treated or boiled to provide safe drinking water. Sufficient water can be carried across plateau areas.

Conflicting Resource Values:

Those opposed to identifying the unit as a study area propose that the area be managed as it presently is with possible protection of the canyon itself as a National Wild and Scenic River or as an area of critical environmental concern. Either designation could protect the canyon from rim to rim, but through wilderness study the proposed wild river could be complimented by protecting important recreation, wildlife, cultural, and other resources within side canyons and on roadless and natural plateau areas adjacent to canyons.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 107,020 acres is identified as a Wilderness Study Area, as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

111-18 POLE CREEK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 31,756 acres of BLM land, in an area 13 miles long and 2½ to 7 miles wide. It contains six small inholdings in the northern half. A 7,000-acre thumb extends out of the southern portion. The unit is located 35 miles west of Grasmere. The unit lies on a flat rolling plateau. The northern half is lightly to moderately eroded into a broad, shallow basin defined by steep, meandering slopes. The basin is further dissected by the sheer-walled meandering canyons of Camas Creek and Pole Creek. The vegetation of the unit is predominately northern high desert shrubs with scattered, sparse stands of juniper in the basin region.

NATURALNESS:

The southern portion of the unit contains few imprints of man other than three small reservoirs adjacent to roads that form the boundaries of the unit and two reservoirs in the southeast periphery of the unit. The road-side reservoirs, and the reservoir east of state Sec. 16, should be excluded from the unit. A small area impacted by mining in the extreme southern edge of the unit should also be excluded. The northern portion of the unit contains four stock ponds and four miles of ways: one way penetrating to the confluence of Camas and Pole Creek from the western boundary and one penetrating to a spring in the northeast portion of the unit from a dead-end road intruding from the eastern boundary. Three of the stock ponds lie adjacent to intruding dead-end roads and should be trimmed from the unit. The ways and stock ponds not excluded from the unit are substantially unnoticeable due to their wide distribution and the flat ground on which they are located. The imprints are effectively screened by the very low profile sagebrush vegetation and scattered juniper even at close distances.

SOLITUDE:

Size and configuration of the main body of the unit are good. The constriction of the unit by a dead-end road and excluded state land to a width of one-quarter mile isolates a 7,247-acre area in the extreme south. The northern portion contains good screening due to the sparse juniper cover, topographic relief provided by the canyons and rolling topography of the plateau and basins. The remainder of the unit is dominated by desert shrub vegetation and contains little topographic relief. The portion of the unit north of the constriction caused by the dead-end road and state land offers outstanding opportunities for solitude due to its size and good screening. The southern thumb of the unit, 7,247 acres, lacks outstanding opportunities for solitude due to its small size and minimal screening.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive recreation opportunities in the unit are primarily associated with the northern basin region and include camping, hiking, backpacking, nature photography, sightseeing, horseback riding, hunting, and fishing. The recreational opportunities are generally considered outstanding because of the unit's large size, and exceptional and unusual natural features and recreational attractions of the basin region and canyons of Pole Creek and Camas Creek. The recreational opportunities are generally considered moderately challenging. Recreation opportunities in the southern plateau region are considered less than outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains significant cultural resource values and ecological values, including antelope range and fawning habitat.

REHABILITATION:

The unit is sufficiently natural in character to qualify as a Wilderness Study Area. However, it may be possible to remove the imprints of man from portions of the unit by hand labor or natural regeneration. Rehabilitation potential will be considered in detail during the study phase of the wilderness review process.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments opposed to identifying a study area specifically mentioned the following reasons:

- The area is not natural because of rock monuments scattered throughout the area; also, mining activity in the southern periphery.

- There are no outstanding opportunities for solitude or for primitive recreation in the canyon areas because of the confining affect of the canyons.

- There are no outstanding primitive recreation opportunities in the unit because the area is dangerous.

Those supporting a study area specifically mentioned the following reasons:

- The unit is natural because it has few impacts of man.

- The unit has outstanding opportunities for solitude because of its size and shape, the presence of unobstructed open space, and the diversity of geography between canyon and plateau areas.

- The unit has outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation because of its size, shape, and topographic diversity.

- One individual felt that the study area should be expanded to the south to include the acreage excluded in the proposed decision.

- The unit has outstanding supplemental values including outstanding scenery, cultural values, and wildlife values (antelope, deer and raptor habitat).

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

No rock monuments were located within this unit, however, rock monuments are widely scattered throughout this region on the top of low hills. They cannot be considered substantial imprints of man on the overall naturalness. As stated in the proposed decision, the imprints of man are few and widely scattered and are therefore substantially unnoticeable.

The reference to rehabilitation in the proposed decision was to areas that already met the naturalness criteria, not to areas that did not.

Solitude:

Opportunities for solitude were considered outstanding in the study area because of topographic screening from the canyons of Camas and Pole Creek as well as the diverse land forms in the area as a whole. There are 16 miles of meandering shallow canyons within the area which one can easily leave in numerous places to explore interesting juniper or sagebrush basins. Because the area offers a diversity of interesting land forms and with easy entry or exit to the main shallow canyons, the canyons do not create a significant corridor effect. Furthermore, any corridor effect in the canyon is minimized by the number of miles of canyon available for use.

Though outstanding opportunities exist in the northern basin/canyon areas, they do not exist in the southern portion of the unit because of a lack of screening on this small area. It is generally recognized that low vegetation on flat terrain can provide excellent screening if the area involved is large. Low vegetation over sufficient distances can provide a blending affect where other visitors or external influences can disappear into the landscape. In this area, vegetation is typified as being extremely short and extremely sparse. This vegetative cover requires significantly more distance than is available in the 7,247-acre southern portion of the unit to provide adequate blending of other visitors or external influences into the landscape. Therefore, the opportunities for solitude cannot be considered outstanding in the southern portion.

Primitive Recreation:

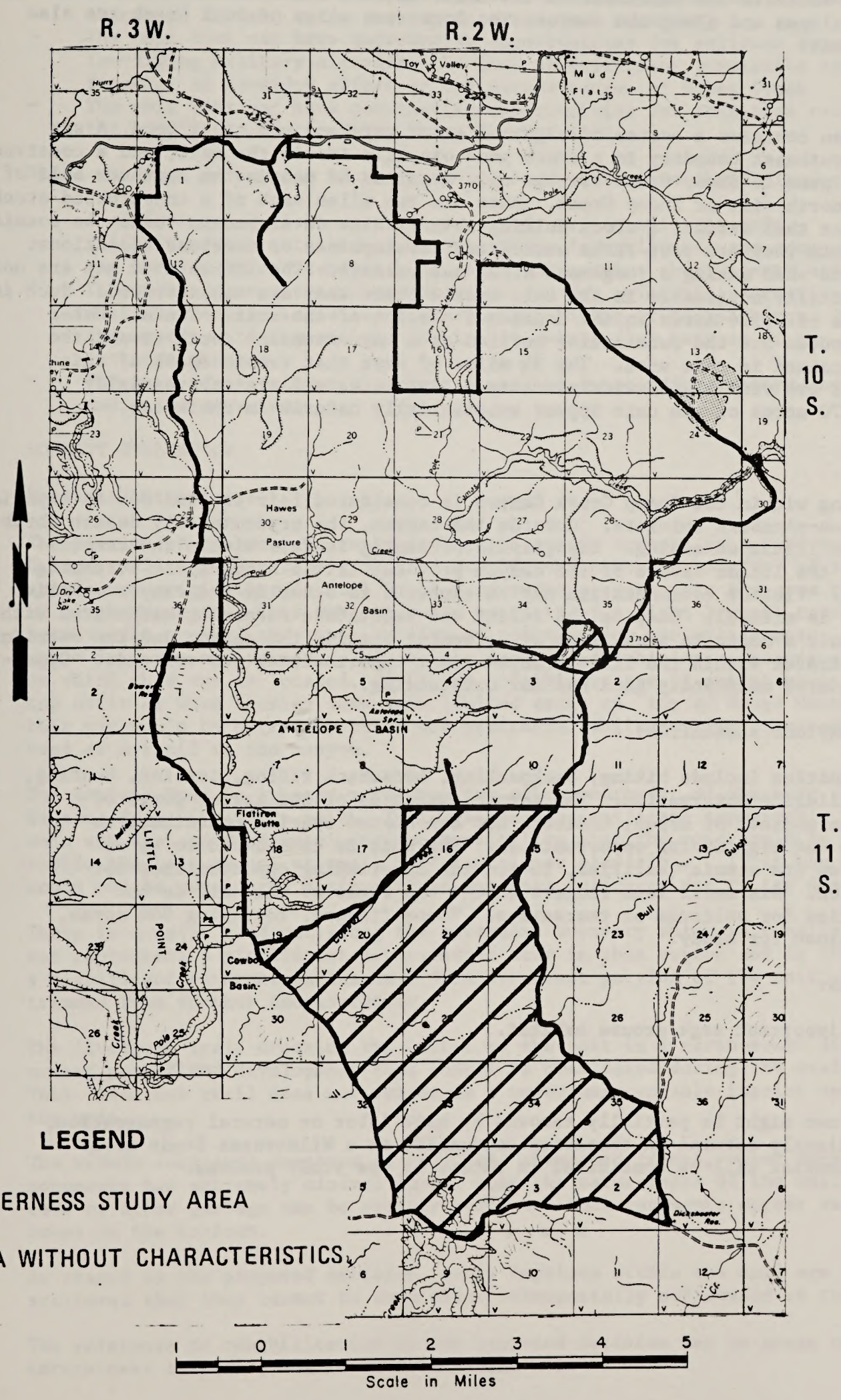
As stated in the proposed decision, primitive recreation opportunities are considered outstanding because of the unit's large size and exceptional and unusual natural features and recreation attractions found in a diversity of geological formations. Recreation activities are not considered dangerous in this area. The physical challenge of recreation experiences are considered only moderate because of the lack of severity in topography. Any sense of physical challenge or danger is an important factor in the achievement of a wilderness experience.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 24,509 acres is identified as a wilderness study area, as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

111–18
POLE CREEK



111-36a SHEEP CREEK WEST

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 15,376 acres of BLM land. The unit is six miles long and 2-5 miles wide and is located six miles north of the Idaho border, 12 miles southeast of Riddle. The unit is a rolling plateau, dissected by moderately deep draws and cut by the canyon of Sheep Creek, over seven miles of which are contained in the unit. The creek flows through a deep, narrow gorge in most of the unit, and occupies a wider valley between large rolling hills at each end of the unit. Riparian trees and shrubs dominate the canyon, and northern desert grasses and shrubs dominate the remainder of the unit. Pockets of aspen and shrubs are found on north and east slopes and along the canyon. The lower two miles of Bull Creek are also contained in the unit.

NATURALNESS:

The northern plateau contains a system of eight miles of ways and one stock pond. A way leading from the southeast boundary to a stock pond one mile inside the unit, and a constructed cow trail from the pond to Sheep Creek are the only imprints of man in the southern half of the unit. On the north side of Sheep Creek, there are two miles each of a constructed stock driveway and a fence that defines a stock holding area. These developments cannot be considered imprints of man since they are post-FLPMA authorized developments or trespass violations. They must be ignored when making a judgement about naturalness. The imprints of man are not considered substantially noticeable in the unit except where they are concentrated. Such is the case in an area of 1,506 acres in the northwest portion of the unit. Tindall Water Hole, its access routes and the substantial portion of a way extending south toward the canyon rim are contained in this area. The 3½ miles of ways that remain south of this portion of the unit are very light, widely scattered imprints, and are substantially unnoticeable. 13,870 acres of the unit appear substantially natural in character.

SOLITUDE:

Vegetative screening within the Sheep Creek Canyon is considered fair to good due to riparian vegetation and aspen-ninebark thickets. Outside the canyon, the predominately desert shrub vegetation provides little screening. Topographic screening is fair within the canyon. Relief is good but the linear nature of the canyon provides little topographic screening within Sheep Creek. Visitor concentration may be expected to occur in the canyon. Relief outside the canyon is minimal. Despite the relief and vegetative screening associated with Sheep Creek, the unit's moderate size, lack of screening outside the canyon and the corridor effect of visitor travel within the linear canyon limit opportunities for solitude. Opportunities are considered moderately good but not outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreation opportunities include hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, camping, hunting, photography, and wildlife observation. The scenic qualities of the narrow gorge of Sheep Creek and the pockets of aspen, ninebark and associated species contribute to outstanding hiking and sightseeing opportunities. The unit is considered to be of adequate size, given its scenic qualities, to provide outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation. Six small land fingers around the edges of the unit do not provide opportunities for solitude or recreation. These fingers, totalling 800 acres, should not be retained for study.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains important sage grouse habitat.

REHABILITATION:

While imprints of man might be partially removed by hand labor or natural regeneration, the unit is sufficiently natural in character to qualify as a Wilderness Study Area. Rehabilitation potential will be considered in detail in the study process.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments expressing opposition to study area identification gave the following specific reasons:

- The area is roaded because of a road from Bull Creek Bridge south to Tindall Water Hole #2 and the base of Rough Mountain; you can see Rowland Road from most of the area.
- The unit is not natural because of a major livestock trail crossing north-south through the center of the unit (should be considered an imprint even though a post-FLPMA trespass), and some imprints scattered throughout the unit including tin cans, abandoned fences, water developments and rock monuments.
- The unit does not have outstanding opportunities for solitude because of frequent low-flying military aircraft, the lack of sufficient vegetative screening and the confinement or corridor affect of the narrow canyon of Sheep Creek.
- The unit does not have outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation because of the confining affect of the Sheep Creek canyon.

Those who were in support of the proposed Study Area gave the following specific reasons:

- A visitor can feel a sense of untouched stillness in the unit.
- The unit offers outstanding opportunities for solitude; one comment stated the area was marginally outstanding because of the canyons short length and straightness.
- The unit offers outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation; the opportunity most frequently listed being outstanding hiking or backpacking. One individual thought the opportunities were only marginally outstanding because of the canyon's short length and straightness.
- The unit has supplemental values including outstanding scenery and wildlife, geological and cultural values.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

The portion of the vehicle route defined by public comment as a road running from Bull Creek Bridge to Tindall Water Hole #2 lies outside the northern boundary of the Study Area. A spur route originating at Bull Creek Road extends south into the area to the southeast base of Rough Mountain. This vehicle route consists of a light 2-wheel track (with sagebrush between the tracks) and shows no sign of construction nor maintenance; therefore, this route is a way maintained solely by the passage of vehicles. Because of the flat terrain on which this way is located, it is not possible to see it except when standing almost on top of it or when looking down from limited areas on top of Rough Mountain. Contact with this way would be extremely brief and peripheral while walking across the plateau unless used as a trail to the canyon.

The Rowland Road is located more than two miles southeast of the unit and generally cannot be seen from within the unit. The presence of significant topographic relief between the unit and Rowland Road precludes the possibility that the road could be seen from anywhere inside the unit except at small isolated higher elevations. If it can be seen, its presence could not be considered a significant external influence due to its distance from the unit.

There is a major road cut along the northeast boundary which is readily visible. This road cut represents a significant inescapeable scar in this region and is therefore considered a significant external influence. This northeast portion of the unit, 1,390 acres, is trimmed from further consideration.

The livestock trail crossing the center of the unit in a north-south direction is an unauthorized post-FLPMA development that cannot be considered during the evaluation of naturalness. This livestock trail does not represent a major unacceptable imprint upon the naturalness of the unit.

The widely scattered presence of tin cans, abandoned fences, water developments and rock monuments has extremely minimal impact upon the naturalness of the unit as a whole. Tin cans or other garbage can be readily removed. Rock monuments appear as natural rock outcrops on the horizon.

As stated in the proposed decision, man's imprints within the unit are so few and so widely scattered that they cannot be considered substantially noticeable in the unit as a whole.

The reference to rehabilitation in the proposed decision was to areas that already met the naturalness criteria, not to areas that did not.

In the proposed decision, the unit was not considered to offer outstanding opportunities for solitude because of the corridor effect of the canyon (the canyon length and linear character does not mitigate the corridor effect) in combination with the lack of sufficient topographic and vegetative screening on the plateaus (the plateau areas are not large enough to achieve an adequate blending of visitors or external influences into the landscape).

It is recognized that the opportunity for solitude is impacted by low-flying aircraft. However, these low-level flights are considered temporary external influences. If the area should be recommended for wilderness, the BLM could initiate negotiations with the Air Force to alter the flight paths of low-level aircraft to lessen their impact.

Primitive Recreation:

The opportunity to achieve a quality primitive recreation experience is dependent upon the interrelationship of a unit's size, confirguration and availability of exceptional or unusual natural features or recreation attractions. Exceptional natural features are those which provide exceptional scenery, diversity of land form and/or reasonable mobility for a visitor, and would result in a strong recreation attraction to an area for one or more types of activities. It is recognized that the canyon of Sheep Creek is narrow and would give a visitor a sense of confinement (loss of mobility). However, it is also recognized that the length of the canyon (5½ miles) is sufficient to minimize the sense of confinement when considered with the rest of the unit. The length of the canyon in combination with the unit's size and diversity of land forms on the surrounding plateaus affords outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation. The opportunity to achieve outstanding recreation experiences in narrow river canyons is widely recognized, particularly if the canyons are lengthy and of exceptional scenic beauty.

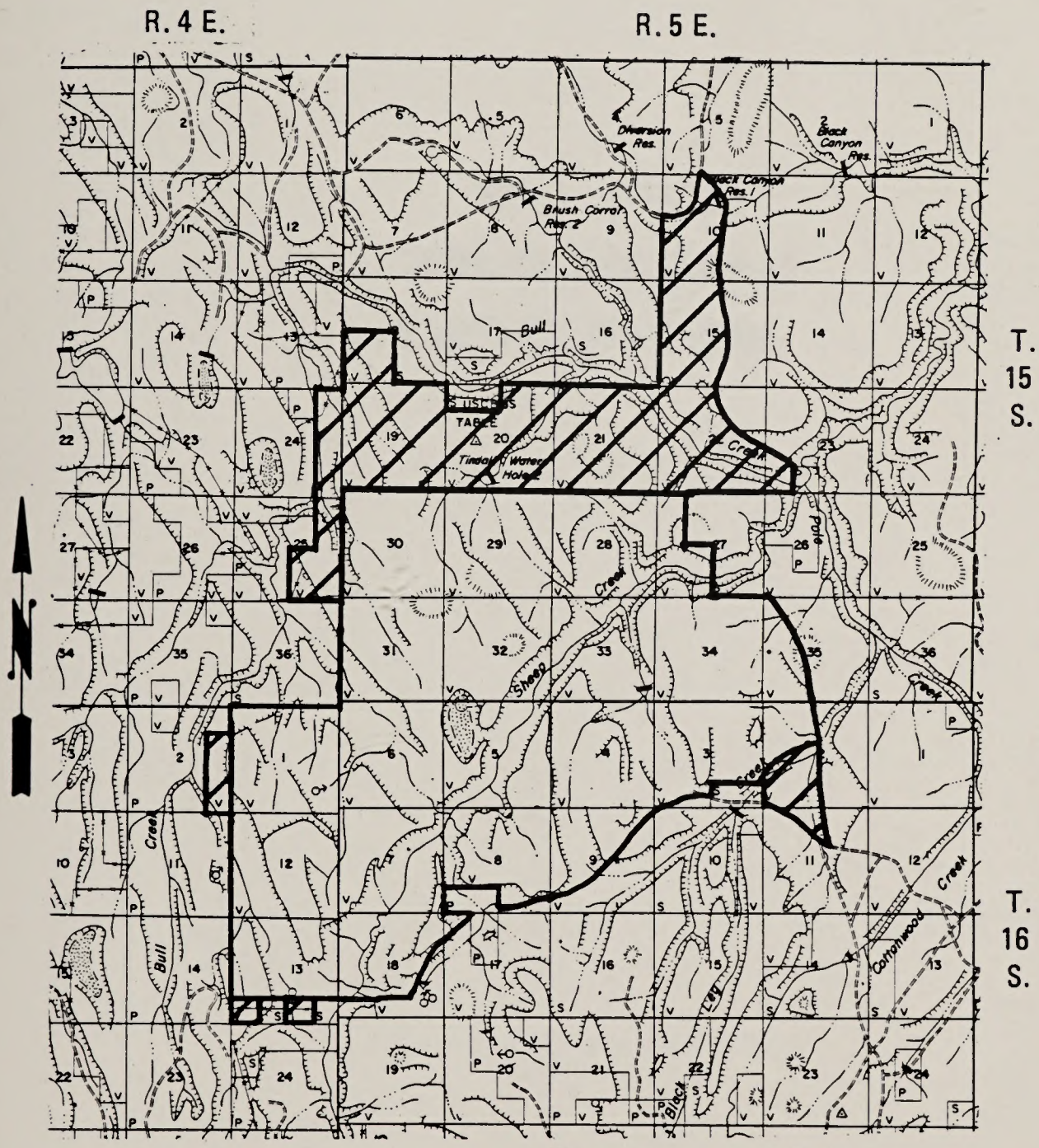
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DECISION:

Due to public comment and evaluations, an additional 1,390 acres are now considered not to have wilderness characteristics. A unit of 11,680 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the recreation criteria.

111–36a

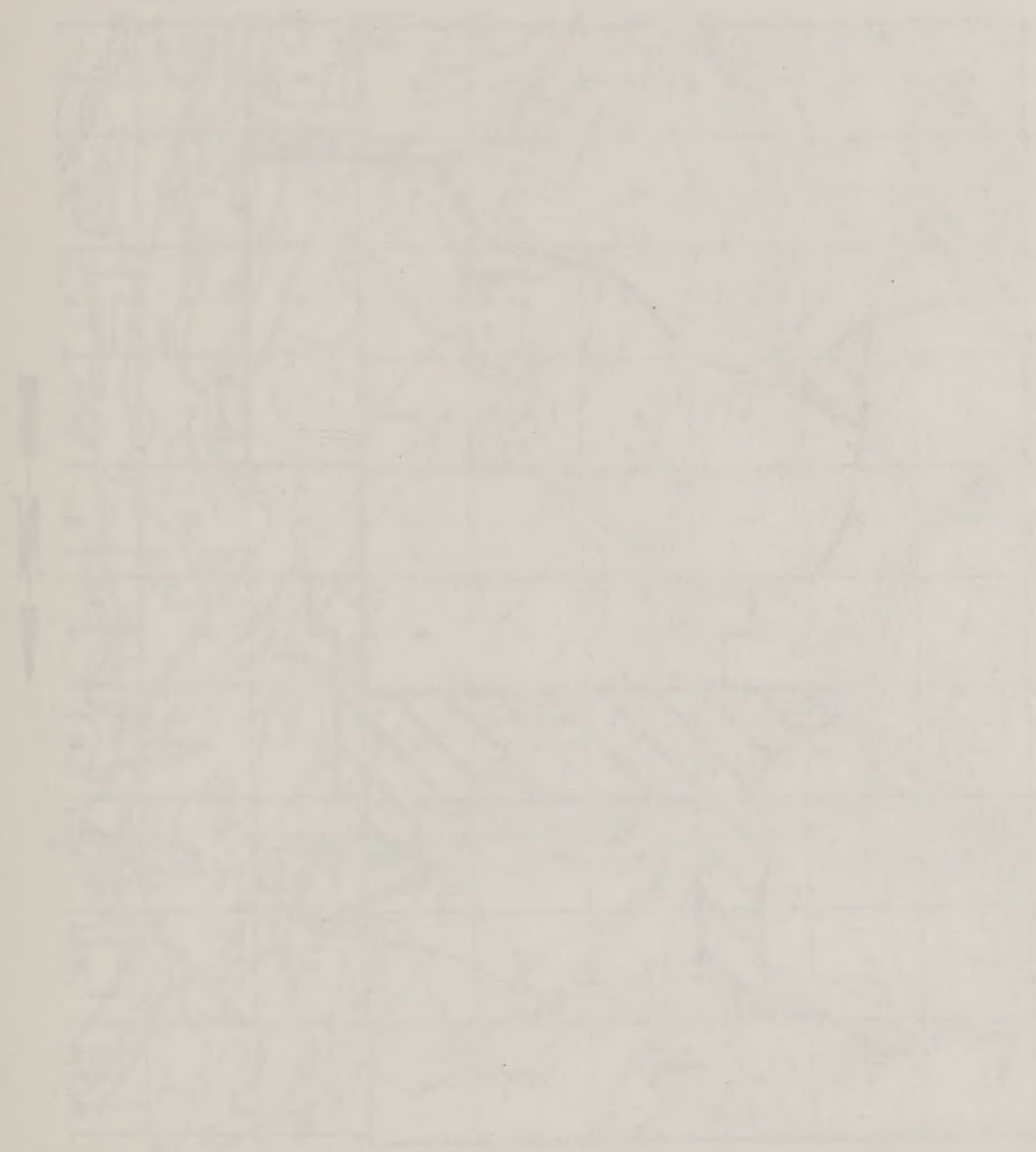
SHEEP CREEK WEST



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

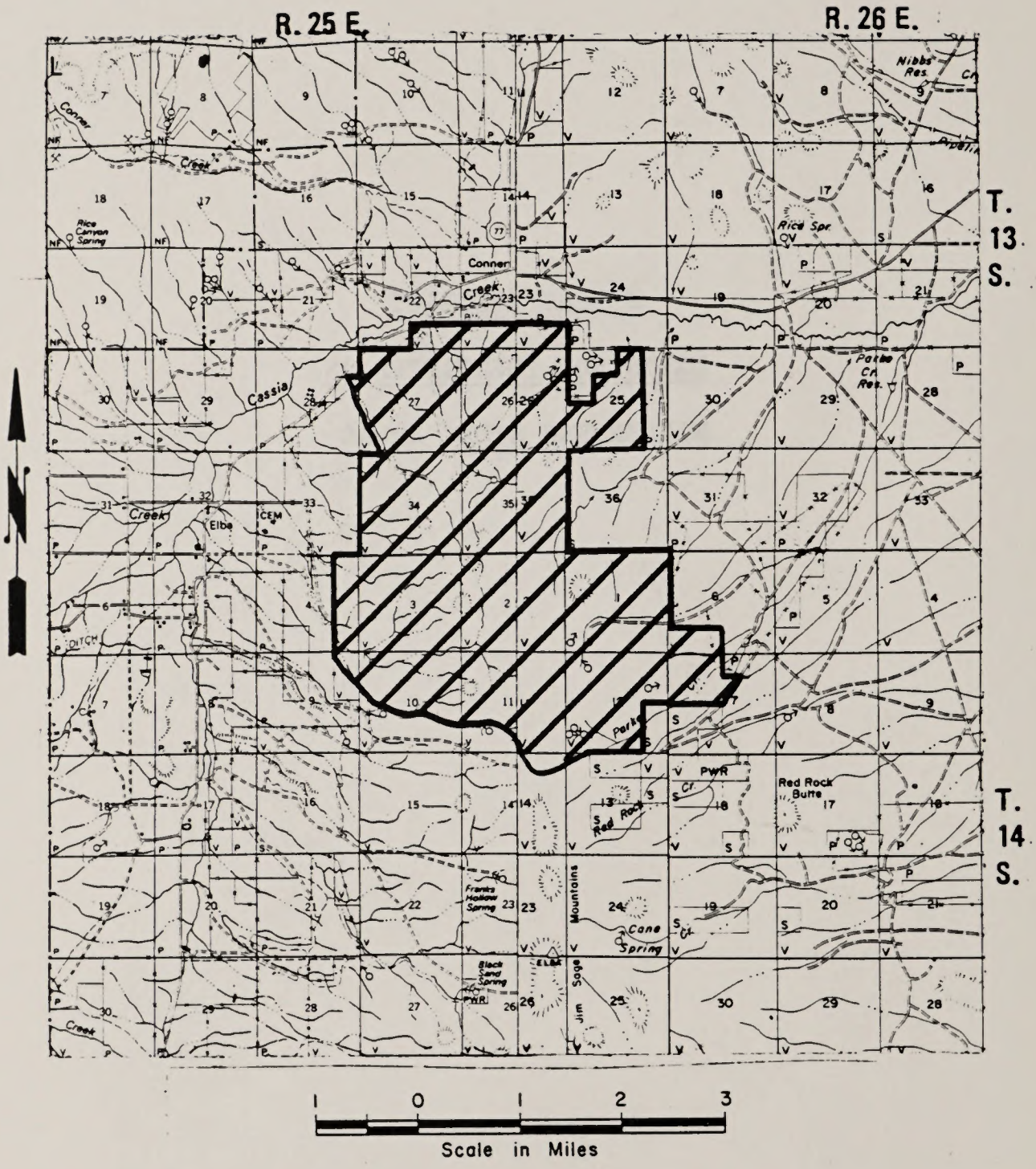


BURLEY DISTRICT

UNITS NOT IDENTIFIED AS

WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

23–1a
JIM SAGE



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

23-1a NORTH JIM SAGE

The June 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 6,901 acres of BLM land, in an irregular configuration, approximately three by four miles. It is located on the north end of the Jim Sage Mountain Range, two miles east of Elba.

The unit's topography is generally rough and mountainous, with rolling hills at lower elevations. Near the Cassia Creek drainage on the north end of the unit, elevation is just under 5,000 feet, and climbs to above 7,500 feet in the southern portion. Vegetation consists of sagebrush, mixed with large concentrations of juniper on the west side.

NATURALNESS:

Three roads and four dead-end ways intrude on the north, east and west sides of the unit. The roads are not actually within the unit but are part of the unit boundary. On the north, several old fencelines and material site excavations are within the unit.

The scattered nature of these impacts causes the unit to appear to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable.

SOLITUDE:

Vegetative and topographic screening are available in some of the higher elevation draws where juniper concentrations are located. However, due to the unit's small size and irregular configuration caused by the dead-end roads, opportunities for solitude are not considered outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreation opportunities include horseback riding, big game and upland bird hunting, camping, hiking and photography. The unit's small size and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions render the recreation opportunities less than outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Portions of the unit contain habitat of the bald eagle and peregrine falcon, endangered species; and the spotted bat, bobcat, pigeon hawk, ferruginous hawk, long-billed curlew and the western burrowing owl, sensitive species.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Public comments that agreed with the proposed decision to drop the unit gave no specific reasons why they agreed.

Comments that disagreed with the proposed decision gave the following specific reasons:

- Unit offers outstanding opportunities for recreation in the form of camping, hiking, horseback riding, and other primitive types of recreation.

- Unit's topography and vegetation support a diversity of wildlife, including the ferruginous hawk.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Solitude:

Comments on solitude were opinions only with no reasons given as to why they felt the unit had outstanding opportunities for solitude.

Primitive Recreation:

Having steep topography and dense vegetation in portions of the unit and a variety of types of recreation that could occur in the unit does not necessarily mean that the unit offers outstanding opportunities.

The opportunity to achieve a primitive recreation experience is dependent upon a unit's size and ability to provide exceptional or unusual natural features or recreation attractions. Exceptional natural features are those which provide exceptional scenery, diversity in landform and/or mobility of travel for a visitor, and would result in a strong recreation attraction to an area for one or more types of activities.

Even though a number of recreation activities could occur within the unit, opportunities are less than outstanding due to the unit's size, less than exceptional scenery, confined locations for recreation activities, and man's activities seen and heard just outside the unit.

Supplemental Values:

Supplemental values present in the unit do not qualify the unit as a study area unless other wilderness characteristics are present.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness in a portion of the unit, and a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

23-1c SOUTH JIM SAGE

The June 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 7,010 acres of BLM land. This figure differs from the 6,190 acres shown in earlier reports due to an acreage correction. The unit is in an irregular configuration, approximately three by five miles, and is located in the southern portion of the Jim Sage Mountain Range, just north of the area known as "The Narrows" on the Raft River.

The unit's topography varies from gentle rolling hills in the south and east portions to moderately steep terrain in the north portion. Elevation varies from below 5,100 feet in the southeast to over 7,200 feet in the north. Vegetation consists of sagebrush, shrubs and native grasses, with a large concentration of junipers in the east portion.

NATURALNESS:

Five roads enter the unit in the south and east portions, and either dead-end, or continue as ways and loop back outside the unit. Also within the unit are 13 ways, concentrated in the south and east portion. Water developments within the unit consist of the Chokecherry water system and the West Bridge Spring system, and include developed springs, pipelines and troughs.

Old mining prospect sites are located in the east portion of the unit and consist of exploratory cuts covering approximately 1/5 mile. Also affecting the unit's naturalness to a minor degree is a 140 acre fire rehabilitation area, which has come back with native grass species. Two old borrow pits in the south are evident although they appear to be unused for years. Old drift fences and small juniper wood cutting areas are located in the west portion.

Considering the small size of the unit, the number of imprint's of man affect the naturalness of the unit to a point where it fails to meet the criteria.

SOLITUDE:

Vegetative and topographic screening are available in some of the unit's interior draws and where dense concentrations of juniper are located. However, due to the small size and very irregular configuration of that portion of the unit where naturalness has not been impacted, the opportunities for solitude are not considered outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreation opportunities include horseback riding, big game and upland bird hunting, camping, hiking and photography. The unit's small size and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions render the recreation opportunities less than outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Portions of the unit contain habitat of the bald eagle and peregrine falcon, endangered species; and the spotted bat, bobcat, pigeon hawk, ferruginous hawk, longbilled curlew and the western burrowing owl, sensitive species. A portion of the unit contains a prehistoric site of cultural value.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Public comments that agreed with the proposed decision to drop the unit gave no specific reasons why they agreed.

Comments that disagreed with the proposed decision gave the following specific reasons:

- Unit offers outstanding opportunities for recreation in the form of camping, hiking, horseback riding, and other primitive types of recreation.

- Unit's topography and vegetation support a diversity of wildlife, including the ferruginous hawk.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Solitude:

Comments on solitude were opinions only, with no reasons given as to why they felt the unit had outstanding opportunities for solitude.

Primitive Recreation:

Having steep topography and dense vegetation in portions of the unit and a variety of types of recreation that could occur in the unit does not necessarily mean that the unit offers outstanding opportunities.

The opportunity to achieve a primitive recreation experience is dependent upon a units size and ability to provide exceptional or unusual natural features or recreation attractions. Exceptional natural features are those which provide exceptional scenery, diversity in landform and/or mobility of travel for a visitor, and would result in a strong recreation attraction to an area for one or more types of activities.

Even though a number of recreation activities could occur within the unit, opportunities are less than outstanding due to the unit's size, less than exceptional scenery, confined locations for recreation activities, and man's activities seen and heard just outside the unit.

Supplemental Values:

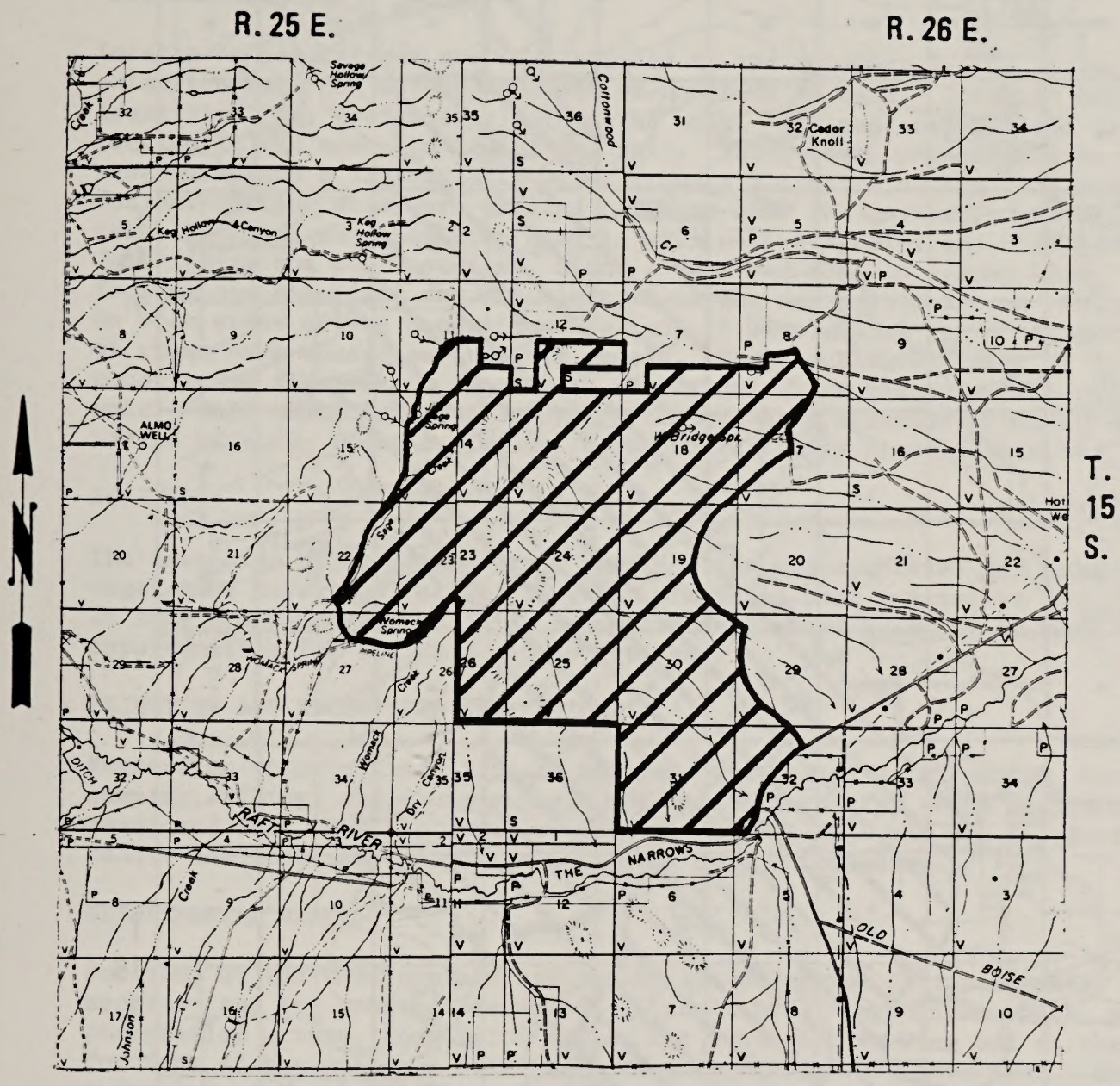
Supplemental values present in the unit do not qualify the unit as a study area unless other wilderness characteristics are present.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness in a portion of the unit, and a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

23–1c
JIM SAGE

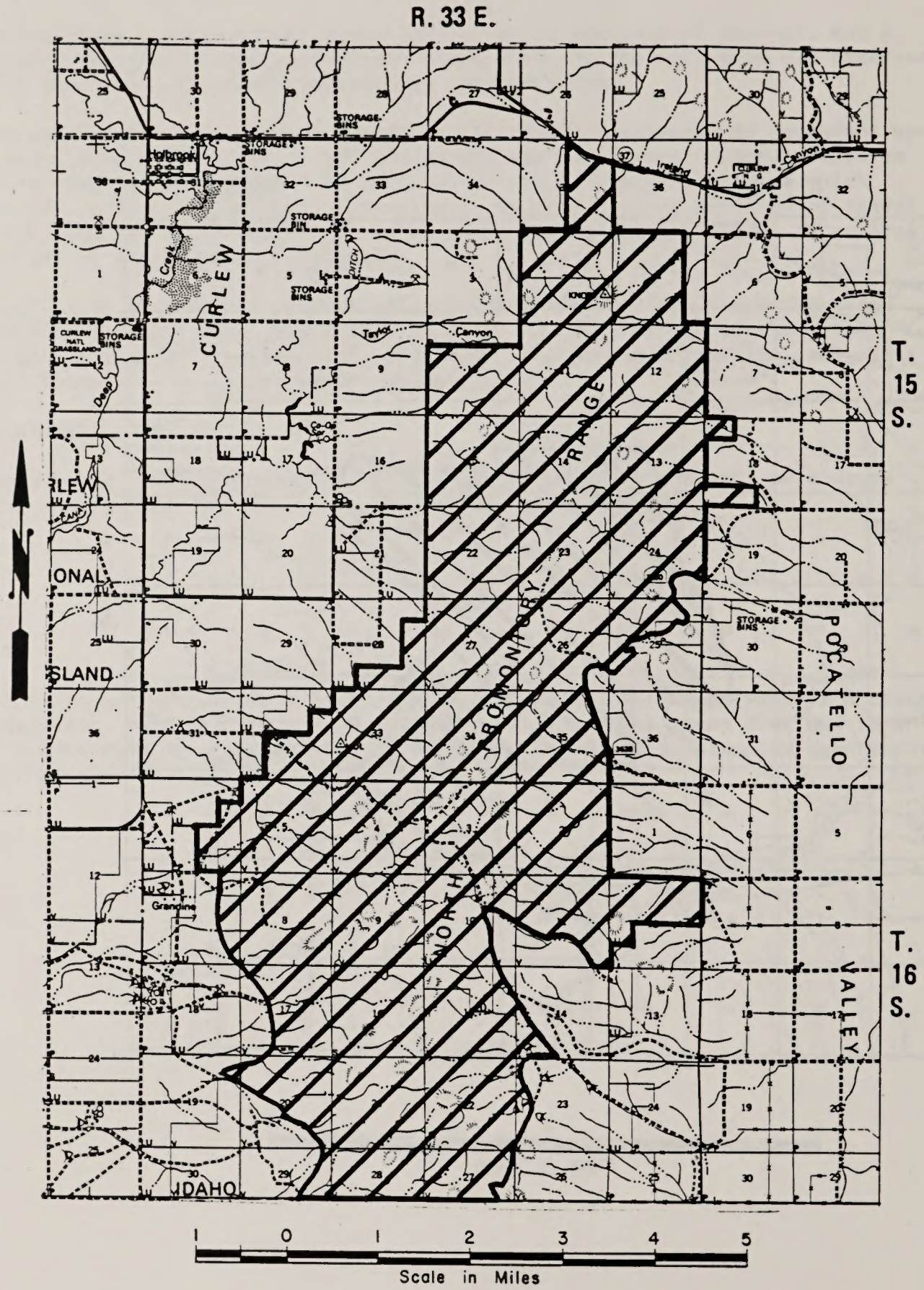


LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

26–1
HANZEL MOUNTAIN



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

26-1 - HANZEL MOUNTAIN

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 20,615 acres of BLM land with a 640-acre state inholding. The irregular shaped unit is approximately 11 miles long and ½ - 4 miles wide, and is located in the North Promontory Range north of the Utah state line, four miles southeast of Holbrook. The unit is located between the Curlew Valley on the west and the Pocatello Valley on the east, and is dominated by a north-south ridge with several side canyons running east and west. On the east side the unit's vegetation is dominated by big sagebrush intermixed with bluebunch wheatgrass with pockets of mountain brush and aspen in some of the drainages. The western side is dominated by Utah juniper with mountain brush in the upper draws.

NATURALNESS:

Impacts on naturalness are concentrated in the southern 2/3 of the unit. Seven roads enter the unit and either dead-end or continue as ways. Thirteen ways have been identified, all dead-ending within the unit. At least seven fence lines are also located in the southern 2/3 of the unit. Water developments include three small reservoirs and a few portable water troughs scattered on the east side of the mountain. Juniper cutting areas are located off ways near the western boundary. A 450-acre fire rehabilitation area has come back in with native species and blends well visually. Just inside the west boundary, along a dead-end road is a dump site. Abandoned dwellings from an old homestead are also located in the southern portion. Sheep camps can be found on both sides of the mountain at the end of ways and on top of ridges, however only two of these have caused any visible impact. The cumulative effect of these impacts constitutes significant impairment of natural characteristics for the southern 2/3 of the unit. Only the northern 1/3 appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable.

SOLITUDE:

The east side of Hanzel Mountain provides few opportunities for solitude due to low vegetative cover and rolling terrain, providing poor vegetative and topographic screening. In some steep draws with thick concentrations of juniper on the west side of the mountain opportunities for solitude can be attained.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreation opportunities include big game and upland game hunting, horseback riding, camping, hiking, and photography. The unit's irregular shape with numerous dead-end roads and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions render the recreation opportunities less than outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Portions of the unit contain habitat of the peregrine falcon and bald eagle, endangered species; and the spotted bat, bobcat, Canada lynx, ferruginous hawk, pigeon hawk, sharptailed grouse, longbilled curlew and western burrowing owl on the sensitive list. Portions of the unit are also critical winter range for mule deer. The unit contains a prehistoric site of cultural value.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that agreed with the proposed decision to drop the unit indicated the unit lacked naturalness, and also gave the following more specific reasons:

- Lack of significant opportunities for solitude due to sparse vegetation and rolling terrain, small size and outside farming operations.
- The unit's irregular shape with numerous dead-end roads and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions render the recreation opportunities less than outstanding.

Comments that disagreed with the proposed decision gave the following specific reasons:

- Entire unit has naturalness.

- Unit has outstanding opportunities for recreation in the form of hunting, hiking, camping, horseback riding, backpacking, and other forms of recreation.

- Lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions does not justify exclusion of the area.

- Has supplemental values for wildlife, providing habitat for two endangered and eight sensitive wildlife species including peregrine falcon, lynx, longbilled curlew, and sharptailed grouse.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

Even though one comment disagreed with the finding that the southern two-thirds of the unit was impaired by human activities, a field check confirmed that the many dead-end roads, ways, fence lines, a dump site, sheep camps, and abandoned buildings do constitute a significant impairment of the natural characteristics of this area. Contrary to one comment, the remaining portion of the unit still retains a natural appearance.

Solitude:

Comments that disagreed with the proposed decision gave no specific reasons why outstanding opportunities for solitude were present.

Primitive Recreation:

The opportunity to achieve a primitive recreation experience is dependent upon a unit's size and ability to provide exceptional or unusual natural features or recreation attractions. Exceptional natural features are those which provide exceptional scenery, diversity in landform and/or mobility of travel for a visitor and would result in a strong recreation attraction to an area for one or more types of activities. Even though a number of recreation activities could occur within the unit, the opportunity is less than outstanding due to the combination of less than exceptional scenery, the number of man's impacts within the unit, the confined locations where the activities occur, and man's activities seen and heard just outside the unit.

Supplemental Values:

Supplemental values within the unit does not mean the unit should become a study area unless it contains other wilderness characteristics.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness in a portion of the unit, and a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

26-3 SOUTH SAMARIA

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 6,615 acres of BLM land in an irregular configuration approximately two by four miles and is located five miles south of Samaria. Lying on the east side of the Samaria Mountains, the unit is dominated by the Brush Creek Canyon drainage. This drainage contains very rough and steep topography covered with sagebrush, juniper and mountain mahogany on the south facing slopes; Douglas fir and aspen on the north facing slopes; and chokecherry and maple in the drainage bottoms. Two fairly broad ridges are within the unit, one runs north-south on the western boundary, and the other runs east-west south of Brush Creek Canyon.

NATURALNESS:

Three dead-end roads, two ways and two foot trails are within the unit. Maple Hollow Road extends from the northern boundary to within 1/4 mile of the southern boundary. The other roads are short access routes from Maple Hollow Road to water development sites. In the eastern portion of the unit are several drift and boundary fences. Woodcutting is evident along the Gardner Canyon Road on the north of the unit and in Brush Creek. Three primitive campsites can be found along Gardner Canyon Road. The majority of these impacts are minor and are scattered throughout the unit, leaving the unit, as a whole, in a natural condition. The above mentioned roads are not within the unit, but form a portion of the boundary.

SOLITUDE:

The western portion of the unit lacks outstanding opportunities for solitude due to narrow configuration, caused by the Maple Hollow Road cutting off this portion from the main section. Good vegetative screening can be found in small aspen-fir pockets in the drainages west of the road. In the eastern portion of the unit, opportunities for solitude are lacking on the eastern and southern facing slopes due to sparse-low vegetation. Farm machinery can be seen and heard as well as the cultivated fields viewed from almost every ridge and slope above Brush Creek Canyon. The only area with opportunities for solitude is the Brush Creek Canyon and portions of its forks where there is thick vegetation in the drainage bottoms, and these opportunities are not considered outstanding due to the small area involved.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreation opportunities include big game and upland bird hunting, camping, hiking, photography and berry picking. The unit's relatively small size and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions render the recreation opportunities less than outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Portions of the unit contain habitat of the peregrine falcon and bald eagle, endangered species; and the spotted bat, bobcat, Canada lynx and pigeon hawk on the sensitive list. Brush Creek Canyon is critical winter range for mule deer. Portions of the unit contain prehistoric sites of cultural value.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that agreed with the proposed decision to drop the unit gave the following specific reasons:

- Lack of significant opportunities for solitude due to sparse vegetation and rolling terrain, outside farming operations, and small size.
- Lack of naturalness, due to man's imprints.
- Lack of outstanding opportunities for recreation due to small unit size and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions.

Comments that disagreed with the proposed decision gave the following specific reasons:

- Unit has outstanding opportunities for solitude due to rugged, steep, varied topography.

- Unit has outstanding opportunities for recreation due to steep topography, dense vegetation along drainages, and north facing slopes.

- Unit has outstanding opportunities for recreation in the form of hunting, hiking, camping, photography, and other forms of recreation.

- Small size and the lack of exceptional or unusual features do not justify dropping the unit, nor are these qualities easy to define.

- Unit has supplemental values for wildlife, providing habitat for six sensitive or endangered species, and has critical mule deer winter range and archaeological sites.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

Contrary to public comment, most of the unit does retain a natural appearance.

Solitude:

Rugged and varied topography does not necessarily mean the unit offers outstanding opportunities for solitude. The unit's size, vegetative screening, sights and sounds of adjacent land activities, and the narrow configuration of the western portion of the unit caused by a dead-end road cutting off this portion from the main section all contribute to the decision that the unit does not have outstanding opportunities for solitude.

Primitive Recreation:

Having steep topography and dense vegetation in portions of the unit and a variety of types of recreation that could occur in the unit does not necessarily mean that the unit offers outstanding opportunities.

The opportunity to achieve a primitive recreation experience is dependent upon a unit's size and ability to provide exceptional or unusual natural features or recreation attractions. Exceptional natural features are those which provide exceptional scenery, diversity in landform and/or mobility of travel for the visitor and would result in a strong recreation attraction to an area for one or more types of activities.

The unit does provide different forms of recreation, but because of the unit's small size, less than exceptional scenery, the confined locations for these recreation activities, plus man's presence just outside the unit that can be seen and heard, the recreation opportunities are less than outstanding.

Supplemental Values:

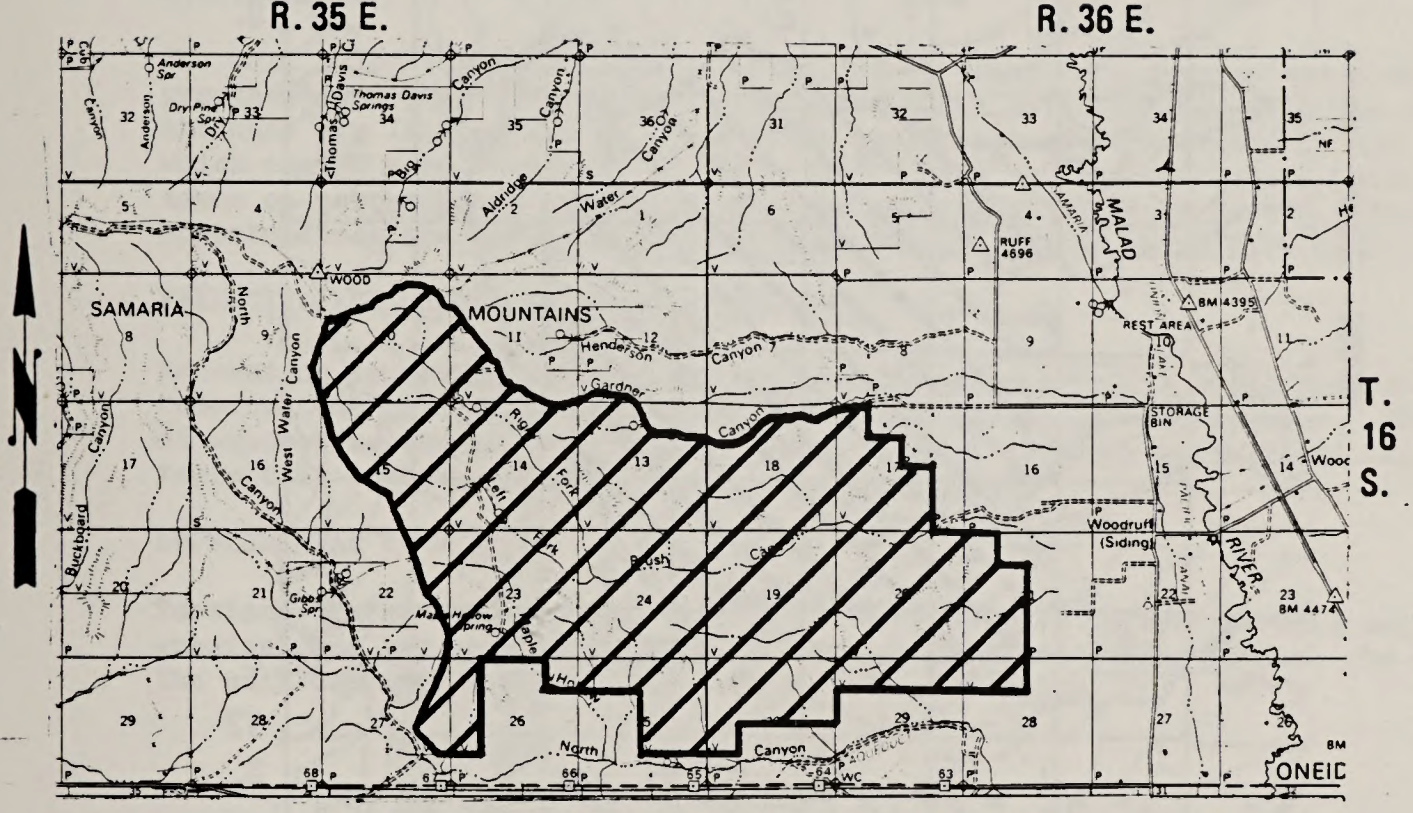
Supplemental values within the unit do not qualify the unit as a study area unless other wilderness characteristics are present.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

26–3
SOUTH SAMARIA

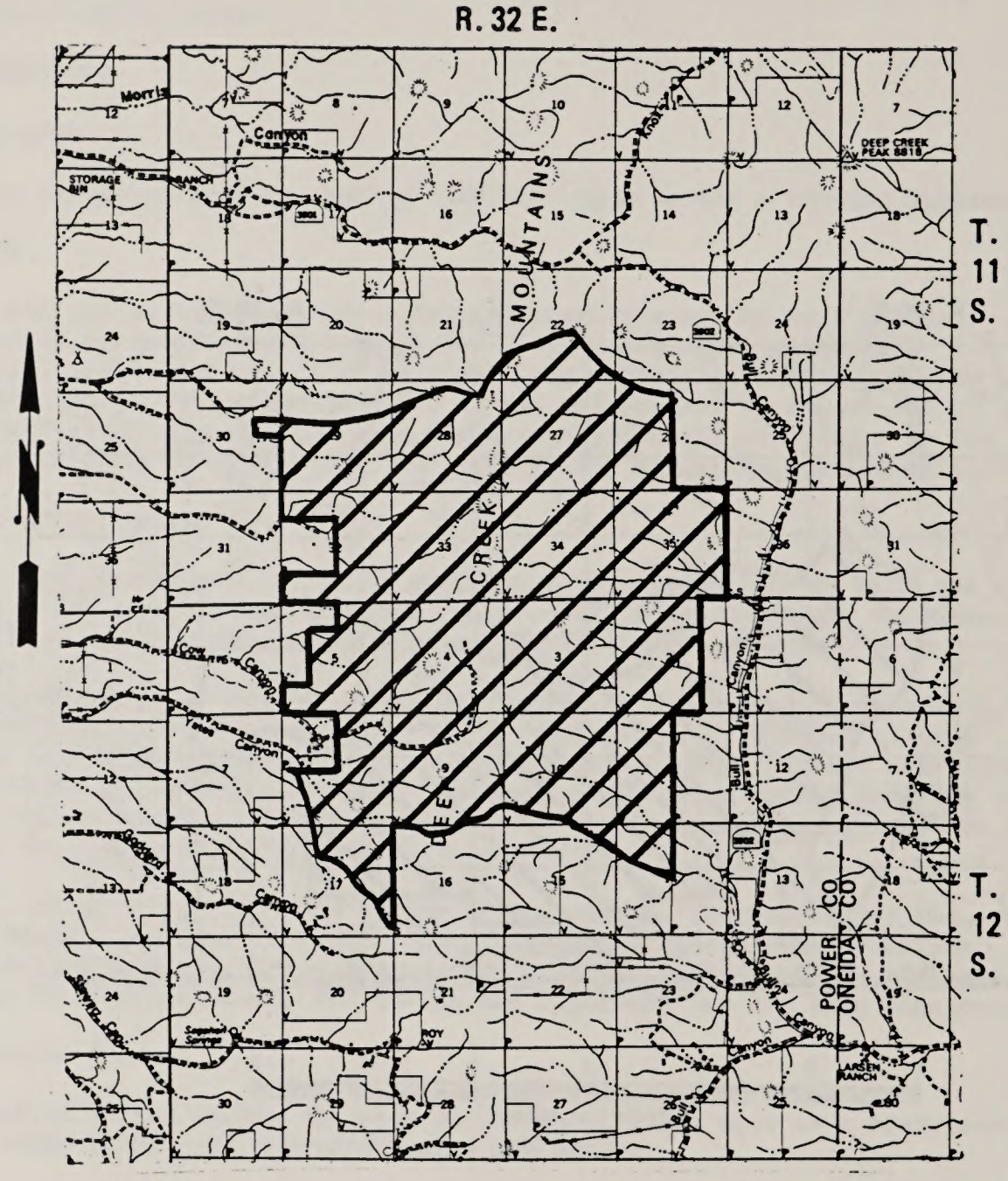


LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

27–1
SOUTH DEEP CREEK



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

27-1 SOUTH DEEP CREEK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 9,609 acres of BLM land, in an area approximately three by four miles and is located seven miles southwest of Arbon. Lying in the southern portion of the Deep Creek Range, which runs north and south between Rockland Valley and Arbon Valley, the unit consists of a main north-south ridge with several side east-west canyons. The canyons on the west side of the range are much more rugged and steeper than on the east.

NATURALNESS:

Imprints of man within the unit consist of two dead-end roads, five ways, and several water developments in the southeast portion near the boundary. Woodcutting has occurred in relatively small areas off the Cow Canyon Road. Four undeveloped recreation sites, used as hunter or sheep camps are just off the roads and ways within the unit. Most of these imprints are minor and located on the periphery of the unit. As a whole, the unit appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable.

SOLITUDE:

The unit's low vegetative cover consisting of sagebrush, juniper and mountain shrubs provides very poor screening. Opportunities for solitude especially on the west side of the unit are lacking due to the outside influences of farm machinery and cultivated fields which can be seen from most of the ridges. Some canyons on the east side, with fir and aspen on north facing slopes, do provide opportunities for solitude. However, these opportunities are not considered outstanding due to the small area involved.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreation opportunities include big game hunting, camping, and berry picking. The numerous cow trails provide opportunities for hiking and photography. The unit's lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions renders the recreation opportunities less than outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Portions of the unit contain habitat of the peregrine falcon and bald eagle, endangered species; and the spotted bat, bobcat, Canada lynx and pigeon hawk on the sensitive list. The unit contains a prehistoric site of cultural value.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that agreed with the proposed decision to drop the unit gave the following specific reasons:

- Lack of naturalness, imprints of man.
- Lack of significant opportunities for solitude due to the sparse vegetation, rolling terrain, small size, and outside farming operations.
- The unit offers limited recreation attractions.

Comments that disagreed with the proposed decision stated the following:

- Area contains an outstanding mountain peak 4-5 miles from existing back roads, many secluded and timbered valleys.
- The unit is topographically varied and includes the highest peak in Deep Creek Mountains. The topographic and vegetative screening (aspen/fir groves) provide outstanding opportunities for solitude.
- Outside sights and sounds are minimal compared to the enjoyment of values within the unit.
- Small size and visibility of farm machinery and fields from ridgetops should not cause this area to be excluded.

- Area is large enough for outstanding opportunities for recreation if combined with the other Deep Creek Unit.

- Opportunities exist for hiking, ski touring, photography, and hunting; good opportunities on high ridges.

- Lack of exceptional or unusual natural features or recreation opportunities is not valid criteria for excluding.

- Area is unspectacular, but truly wild and replete with the growth and animals we need to preserve.

- Area provides habitat for numerous endangered or sensitive wildlife species and archaeological values.

- Closure of the jeep road from Bull Canyon to Knox Canyon, plus some connecting logging roads, would allow area to return to wilderness quality condition.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

The proposed decision indicated that some imprints of man do exist, but as a whole the unit is natural in character. The jeep road from Bull Canyon to Left Fork of Knox Canyon Road is definitely a road that has been improved and maintained periodically for continuous use. The comment on connecting logging roads in the area was not specific in giving the locations of these roads. There are no logging roads within the unit.

Solitude:

The unit is located in the Deep Creek Range and has mountain peaks over 7,000 feet in elevation. Much of the unit is above the timber line and affords very little vegetative screening. A few of the lower elevation canyons, where Douglas and sub-alpine fir can be found, provide opportunites for solitude. However, these opportunities are not considered outstanding due to the small area involved. The size, natural screening, and ability of the user to find a secluded spot are valid elements to be used to determine whether the unit offers outstanding opportunities. The low vegetative cover in the majority of the unit, combined with the outside influences of farm machinery and cultivated fields adjacent to the boundary, affects opportunities for solitude.

Primitive Recreation:

Having steep topography and dense vegetation in portions of the unit and a variety of types of recreation that could occur in the unit does not necessarily mean that the unit offers outstanding opportunities.

The opportunity to achieve a primitive recreation experience is dependent upon a unit's size and ability to provide exceptional or unusual natural features or recreation attractions. Exceptional natural features are those which provide exceptional scenery, diversity in landform and/or mobility of travel for a visitor, and result in a strong recreation attraction to an area for one or more types of activities.

Although there are a number of recreation activities that could occur within the unit, the opportunity is less than outstanding due to the unit's size, less than exceptional scenery, the confined locations for recreation activities, and man's presence just outside the unit that can be seen and heard.

Supplemental Values:

Supplemental values within the unit does not mean that the unit should become a study area unless other wilderness characteristics are present.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

27-2 DEEP CREEK PEAK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 6,646 acres of BLM land, in an irregular shaped area approximately 1/2-3 by five miles. This unit is located in the Deep Creek Range, five miles west of Arbon. Lying in the middle portion of the Deep Creek Range which runs north and south between Rockland Valley and Arbon Valley, the unit consists of a main north-south ridge with several side canyons running east-west.

NATURALNESS:

Imprints of man are generally found just inside the unit boundaries. Three roads dead-end within the unit. Seven ways, primarily off the western boundary roads either dead-end at wood cutting areas or connect back to roads. Selective woodcutting has occurred just off the Left Fork Knox Canyon Road and Bull Canyon Road. Several corral fences, a small stock pond and five undeveloped recreation sites constitute other impacts on naturalness. Most of the imprints of man are minor and near the unit boundaries, with the unit as a whole appearing to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature.

SOLITUDE:

Much of the unit is above the timber line and is covered by sagebrush, mountain brush and native grasses. Only in the lower elevation canyons where Douglas fir and sub-alpine fir are found is there sufficient vegetation and topography to provide opportunities for solitude. The unit's small size, narrow configuration and poor vegetative screening do not afford opportunities that are considered outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreation opportunities include big game and upland game hunting, camping, hiking, photography and berry picking. The unit's small size and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions render the recreation opportunities less than outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Portions of the unit contain habitat of the peregrine falcon and bald eagle, endangered species; and the spotted bat, bobcat, Canada lynx, and pigeon hawk on the sensitive list. The unit contains a prehistoric site of cultural value.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that agreed with the proposed decision to drop the unit gave the following specific reasons:

- Lack of naturalness, imprints of man.
- Lack of significant opportunities for solitude due to the sparse vegetation, rolling terrain, small size, and outside farming operations.
- The unit offers limited recreation attractions.

Comments that disagreed with the proposed decision stated the following:

- Area contains an outstanding mountain peak 4-5 miles from existing back roads, many secluded and timbered valleys.
- The unit is topographically varied and includes the highest peak in Deep Creek Mountains. The topographic and vegetative screening (aspen/fir groves) provide outstanding opportunities for solitude.
- Outside sights and sounds are minimal compared to the enjoyment of values within the unit.
- Small size and visibility of farm machinery and fields from ridgetops should not cause this area to be excluded.

- Area is large enough for outstanding opportunities for recreation if combined with the other Deep Creek Unit.

- Opportunities exist for hiking, ski touring, photography, and hunting; good opportunities on high ridges.

- Lack of exceptional or unusual natural features or recreation opportunities is not valid criteria for excluding.

- Area is unspectacular, but truly wild and replete with the growth and animals we need to preserve.

- Area provides habitat for numerous endangered or sensitive wildlife species and archaeological values.

- Closure of the jeep road from Bull Canyon to Knox Canyon, plus some connecting logging roads, would allow area to return to wilderness quality condition.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

The proposed decision indicated that some imprints of man do exist, but as a whole the unit is natural in character. The jeep road from Bull Canyon to Left Fork of Knox Canyon Road is definitely a road that has been improved and maintained periodically for continuous use. The comment on connecting logging roads in the area was not specific in giving the locations of these roads. There are no logging roads within the unit.

Solitude:

The unit is located in the Deep Creek Range and has mountain peaks over 7,000 feet in elevation. Much of the unit is above the timber line and affords very little vegetative screening. A few of the lower elevation canyons, where Douglas and sub-alpine fir can be found, provide opportunites for solitude. However, these opportunities are not considered outstanding due to the small area involved. The size, natural screening, and ability of the user to find a secluded spot are valid elements to be used to determine whether the unit offers outstanding opportunities. The low vegetative cover in the majority of the unit, combined with the outside influences of farm machinery and cultivated fields adjacent to the boundary, affects opportunities for solitude.

Primitive Recreation:

Having steep topography and dense vegetation in portions of the unit and a variety of types of recreation that could occur in the unit does not necessarily mean that the unit offers outstanding opportunities.

The opportunity to achieve a primitive recreation experience is dependent upon a unit's size and ability to provide exceptional or unusual natural features or recreation attractions. Exceptional natural features are those which provide exceptional scenery, diversity in landform and/or mobility of travel for a visitor, and result in a strong recreation attraction to an area for one or more types of activities.

Although there are a number of recreation activities that could occur within the unit, the opportunity is less than outstanding due to the unit's size, less than exceptional scenery, the confined locations for recreation activities, and man's presence just outside the unit that can be seen and heard.

Supplemental Values:

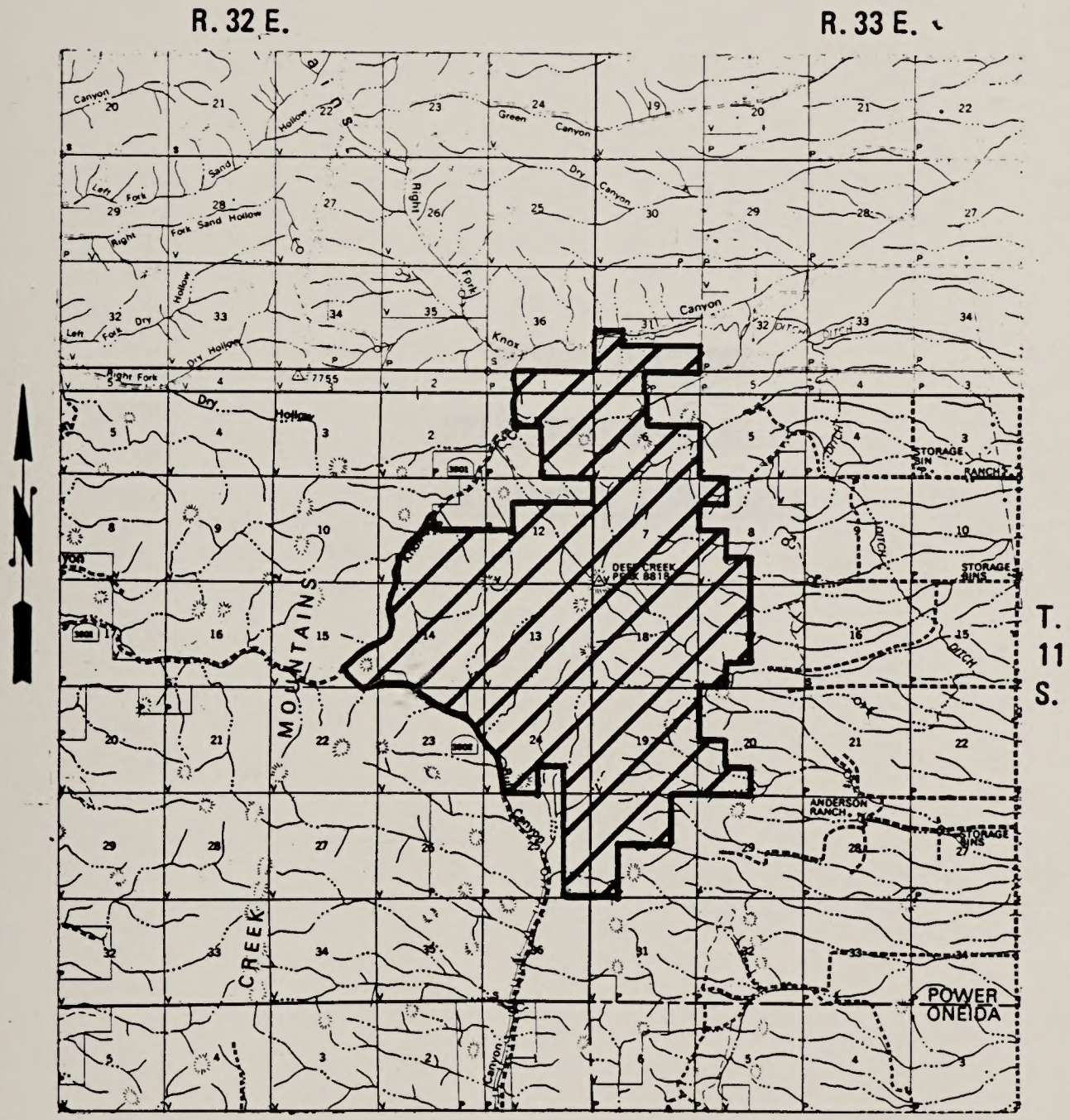
Supplemental values within the unit does not mean that the unit should become a study area unless other wilderness characteristics are present.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

27–2
DEEP CREEK PEAK



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

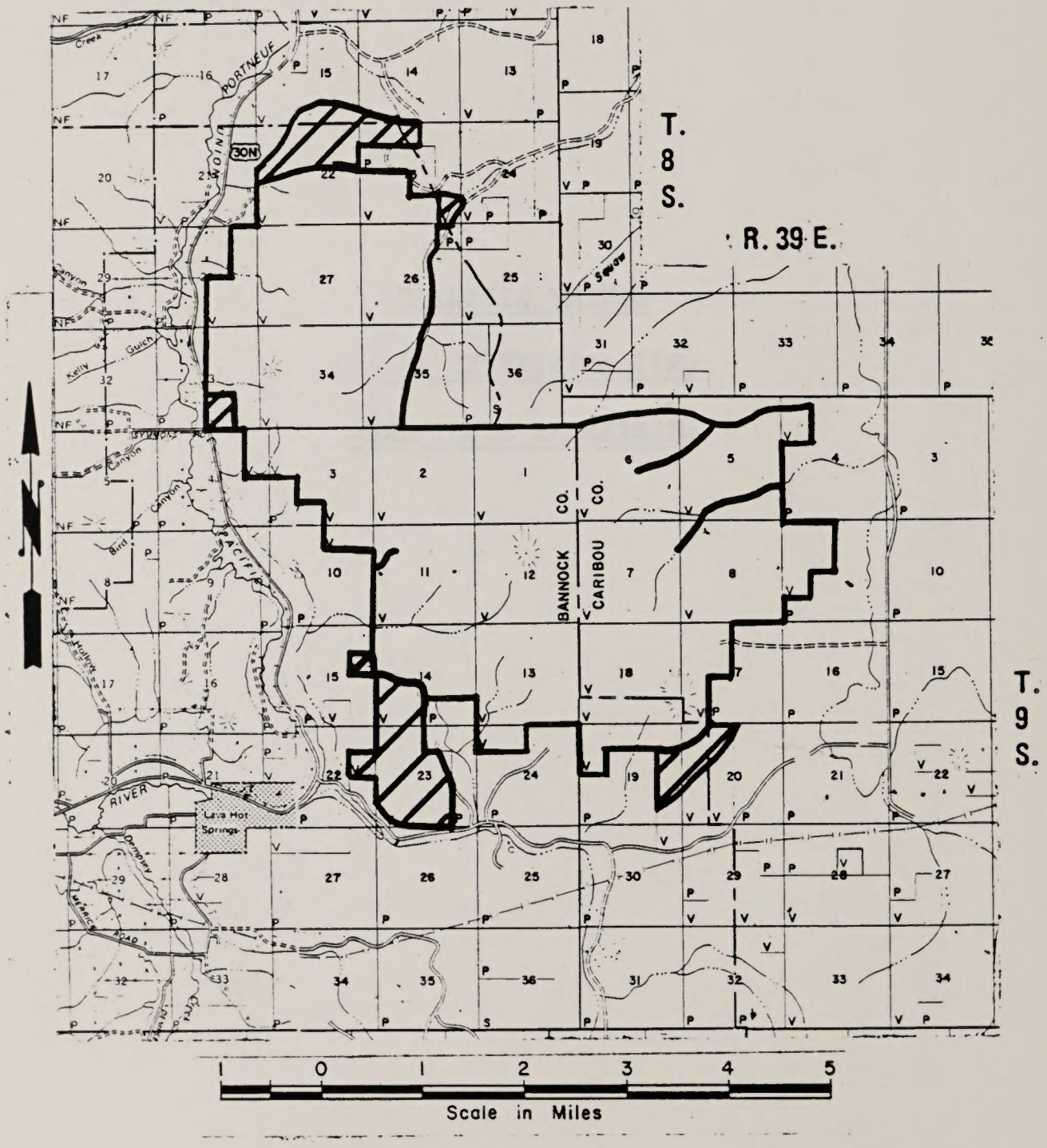
AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

BURLEY DISTRICT

UNIT IDENTIFIED AS A

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

28–1
PETTICOAT PEAK



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

28-1 PETTICOAT PEAK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 13,046 acres of BLM land, in an irregular configuration approximately five by seven miles, and is located one mile northeast of Lava Hot Springs. The unit is in the Fish Creek Mountain Range just east of the Portneuf River. Topography is rough and mountainous with elevations ranging from 8,033 feet on Petticoat Peak in the central portion to 5,500 feet in the southwest portion of the unit. Many canyons and ridges radiate from the mountain peak. Vegetation consists of junipers, mountain shrubs and sagebrush in the western portion of the unit. Douglas fir intermingled with aspen, mountain shrubs and Limber pine dominate the eastern half of the unit.

NATURALNESS:

Almost all of the imprints of man are found along the boundaries or in near proximity to the dead-end roads and ways within the unit. Five roads and 17 ways are scattered throughout the unit, however the majority of these access routes are very short (under ½ mile in length), dead-end up the various drainages, and are reverting back to a natural condition due to little or no use. Minor woodcutting areas can be located off a number of the ways. Hunter-sheep camps are located at the end of most ways, however these camps generally have no impact on the naturalness of the unit. Several old stock reservoirs and trash sites have been located within the unit, providing only a small localized impact. Due to the rough terrain and dense vegetative cover the ways and other imprints of man generally provide individual localized impacts only, with no significant impact on the naturalness of the unit as a whole.

SOLITUDE:

With several peaks over 7,000 feet throughout the unit, in combination with numerous canyons and variety in terrain and elevation there are opportunities for solitude that are considered outstanding. The canyons and drainages are well vegetated with a variety of species including bitterbrush, snowberry, mountain maple, mountain mahogany, juniper, Douglas fir and quaking aspen. The higher elevations are dominated by fir and aspen that provide excellent vegetative screening for outstanding opportunities for solitude. Major outside influences such as the Fish Creek Highway along the southeast portion, along with irregular configurations in conjunction with ways have caused the trimming of a total of 1,688 acres in the north, southwest and southeast portions as lacking outstanding opportunities for solitude and recreation. The Union Pacific Railroad passes within ½ mile of the unit on the west and within three miles on the east. However, use on this track is not considered to be a major outside influence due to its intermittent nature and the screening available.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The variety of terrain and vegetative cover provides excellent habitat for mule deer and grouse. This provides unconfined recreation opportunities for big game and upland game hunting. The many high peaks and meadows provide opportunities for camping, hiking, horseback riding, and photography. Although a variety of opportunities exist, these are not considered to be outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Portions of the unit contain habitat of peregrine falcon, whooping crane and bald eagle, endangered species; and the spotted bat, bobcat, Canada lynx and pigeon hawk on the sensitive list. A portion of the unit is critical winter range for mule deer.

REHABILITATION:

All of the ways within the unit could revert to a natural condition if closed to vehicular traffic.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that supported the unit as a study area gave the following specific reasons:

- Some imprints of man exist but they are not substantially noticeable and will return to a natural state if left alone.

- Unit contains opportunities for solitude such as in small timbered valleys far away from major roads.

- Opportunities for solitude can be found beyond and along the access routes.

- Broken topography provides outstanding opportunities for solitude.

- Provides outstanding opportunities for hiking, photography, hunting, ski touring, sightseeing.

- Beyond the access routes the area provides ample vegetation along primitive trails, where motorized vehicles are unable to travel.

- Good cross section of plant and animal community; very few areas have habitat for elk and mountain lion in wilderness setting in southeast Idaho. Unique ecological system should be protected.

- Area is critical mule deer winter range; heavy vegetation provides excellent habitat for wildlife.

Comments that disagreed with the proposed decision gave the following specific reasons:

- The area is not a roadless area; there are dead-end roads and jeep trails up many canyons, making 5,000 roadless acres impossible.

- The area has developed springs and salt grounds within it.

- On both sides of the mountain range, in the bottom of each canyon (the main canyons) is a road that is used by ranchers, hunters, and the general public for outings. It is doubtful that the bottoms of the canyons could return to original state.

- Five roads and seventeen vehicle ways are scattered throughout the unit; these adversely affect the unit's naturalness.

- Timber was logged within the unit some years ago.

- Roads and trails come within 1/2 mile of connecting across the ridge.

- The area is not large, containing only 13,046 acres.

- Opportunities for solitude are not outstanding due to Union Pacific trains passing on the west and north sides of the unit almost every hour, with whistles audible from any area inside the unit.

- In many areas heavy truck traffic from the highway is audible.

- From any high elevation the visitor must be aware of man's imprint through all types of development from towns, farming, roads, railways, etc., outside the unit.

- Sights and sounds of man will not afford a visitor outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation.

- Man's use for recreation is limited by lack of water and very few grass patches.

- Man can walk out of area in any direction in 30 minutes to one hour.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

Opponents to study area identification for the unit felt the cherry-stemming of dead-end roads was not consistent with the roadless requirement in the BLM inventory policy. Also, many felt that all vehicle routes were roads, therefore, affecting the naturalness of the unit, as well as splitting the unit into roadless areas of less than 5,000 acres.

Under the BLM guidelines a study area is defined as a roadless area of 5,000 acres or more (or of sufficient size) within which can be found wilderness characteristics. A roadless area is any land (regardless of size of configuration) lying between two or more roads (including dead-end roads) and/or state and private land. Therefore, by definition, a study area may be defined by the physical edge of roads. Consequently, roads which define boundaries cannot be used to declare an area "roaded."

The field inventory identified several vehicle routes that showed evidence of having been improved and maintained by mechanical means to insure relatively regular and continuous use. These routes are classified as roads and continue as vehicle ways (maintained solely by passage of vehicles) inside the unit until they dead-end.

Two of the roads are boundary roads for the unit, the Right Fork of Red House Canyon Road and the North Canyon Road. The others are cherry-stem roads that penetrate the unit, and include Upper Mill Creek Road and Right Fork of North Canyon Road.

There are numerous vehicle ways that penetrate the unit. Most of the ways are found in drainages and show evidence of having been bladed and maintained at one time. Most ways are less than .4 mile in length and are reverting to a natural condition due to little or no use. The longest route goes up Rindlishbaker Canyon as a road for 1.2 miles, then continues as a vehicle way for .8 mile and ends near the top of the ridge in a dry meadow. Due to the rough terrain and dense vegetation cover, the cherry-stem roads and vehicle ways provide individual localized impacts only, with no significant impact on the naturalness of the area as a whole.

One comment felt the Bureau had missed a road, the road that goes up the ridge west of Clark Spring through a piece of private property, but this road was identified in the inventory and is part of the unit's eastern boundary line. This area was field checked again and the road was reconfirmed as part of the eastern boundary.

All maintained water developments were found to be outside the proposed boundaries. The few saltblock areas, old stock reservoirs, and old wood-cutting sites found within the study area provide individual localized minor impacts only, with no significant impact on the naturalness of the area as a whole.

A ten-acre materials site thought to be just outside the proposed area was actually found to be just inside the western boundary. The materials site has not been used in years, but definitely shows the imprint of man's work.

The reference to rehabilitation in the proposed decision was to areas that already met the naturalness criteria, not to areas that did not.

Solitude:

Several of the comments indicated that train and vehicle noises from outside the unit adversely affect opportunities for solitude. Others felt the visibility of man's imprints outside the unit from the top of ridges also affected the opportunities for solitude.

The Union Pacific Railroad tracks are near the study area boundary; approximately 24 times a day trains can be heard and seen from certain portions of the area for very short time periods. The majority of the area has excellent variety of terrain and vegetation cover that gives the visitor opportunities for solitude where the sights and sounds of the trains and vehicles cannot be seen or heard.

Primitive Recreation:

The area does offer a number of recreation opportunities, but these are not considered outstanding.

* * *

DECISION:

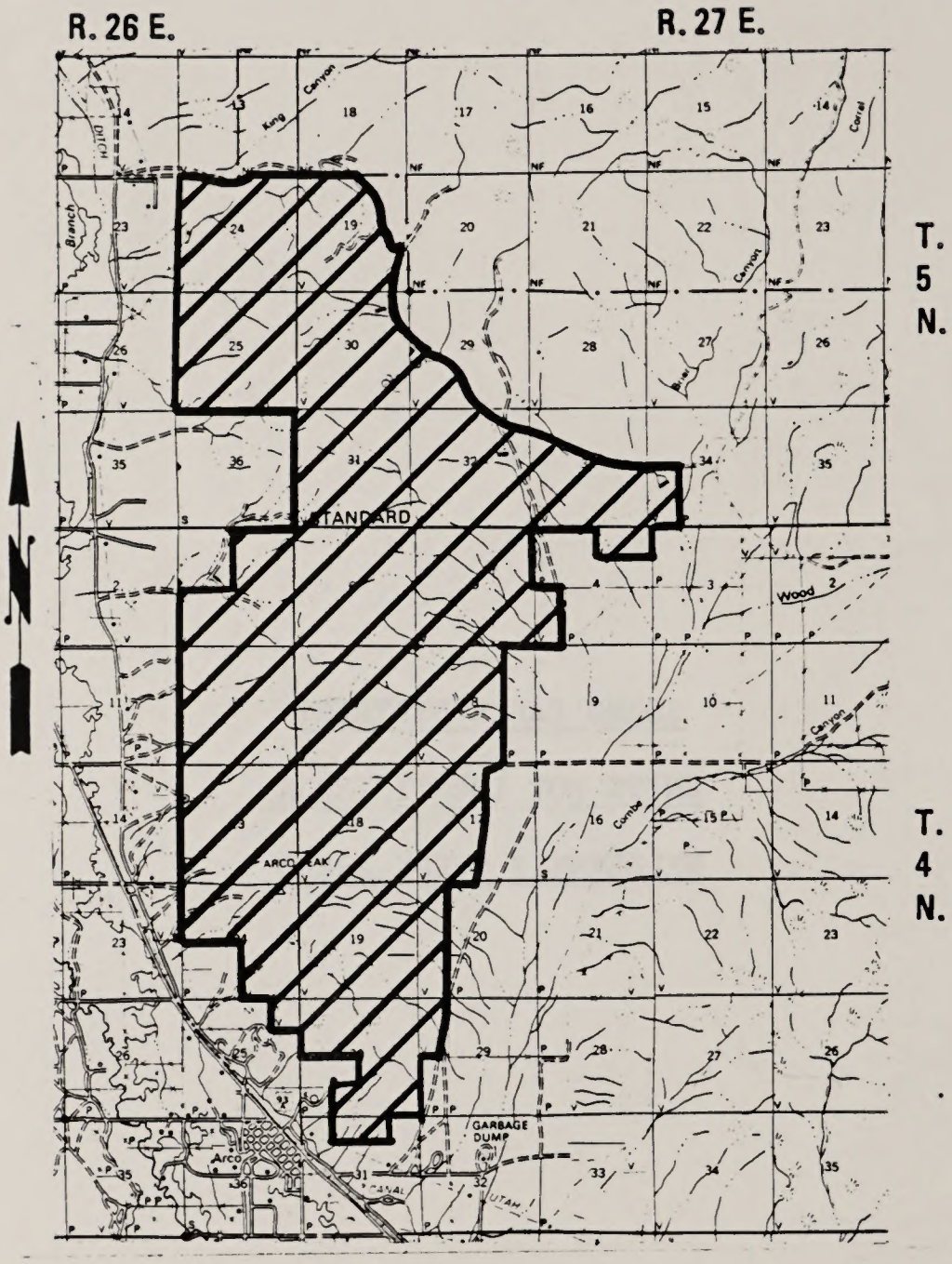
No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. However, additional field evaluation indicated a need to drop a 60-acre area affected by the materials site as noted in the naturalness section. A unit of 11,298 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude criteria.

IDAHO FALLS DISTRICT

UNITS NOT IDENTIFIED AS

WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

31–10
ILLINOIS



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 11,150 acres of BLM land and lies at the southeastern end of Big Lost Valley, northeast of Arco. The unit encompasses portions of the southern foothills of the Lost River Mountain Range. It forms a mountainous peninsula between the Big Lost River Valley and the small valley north of Butte City. Steep cliffs mark the western edge of the area while more gentle slopes are to the east. There are occasional springs and a few intermittent streams. Sagebrush and grasses form the dominant vegetative community, with scattered junipers on the rocky slopes.

NATURALNESS:

The southern portion of the unit is heavily impacted with a powerline, vehicle trail, a partially gravelled road, several small gravel piles, and numerous substantial vehicle ways criss-crossing the area. Numbers have been painted by Arco's high school classes on the western cliffs, some of which are in the unit and easily visible from the town below. Other major impacts throughout the unit are a bladed jeep trail, three short roads, numerous ways, and barbed wire fences. Several livestock watering troughs are located in the northeast portion of the unit. Impacts outside the unit that affect the naturalness are extremely obtrusive, particularly to the southeast. The sights and sounds of Arco intrude to a great degree and appear almost contiguous to the unit. The town's garbage dump and landfill are visible to the southeast, and seven miles of railroad track runs within one mile of the unit boundary. Twelve borrow pits, four quarrys and a gravel pit are within one mile of the unit as are the town of Moore, Highway 93, and several roads. To the east, agricultural lands and structures are visible. The cumulative effects of these impacts from inside and outside the unit are extremely imposing and substantially decrease the apparent naturalness of the unit.

SOLITUDE:

Low level vegetation and open slopes dominate the unit and offer little vegetative or topographic screening. In a few scattered areas where there are stands of conifers, vegetative screening is considered good. Localized areas in the central and northern portions, which contain higher ridges, offer some additional screening, but in general topographic screening is minimal. The towns of Arco and Moore, nearby highway systems, the municipal landfill and adjacent intensively cultivated land appear to be significant outside influences. Although it may be possible to find opportunities for solitude in localized areas, the small size, irregular configuration, and minimal topographic and vegetative screening do not afford opportunities which are outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities include camping, backpacking, hiking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and spelunking. Natural features of the unit offer little challenge associated with these recreational opportunities. The unit's small size and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreational attractions, render the recreational opportunities less than outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The scenic values in portions of this unit are fairly high. Rock formations created through geologic processes of uplift and erosion provide picturesque and interesting dikes and spires of geological or educational value. Portions of the unit have been identified as critical deer winter range and a small sector at the southern tip as having Chukar partridge concentrations.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

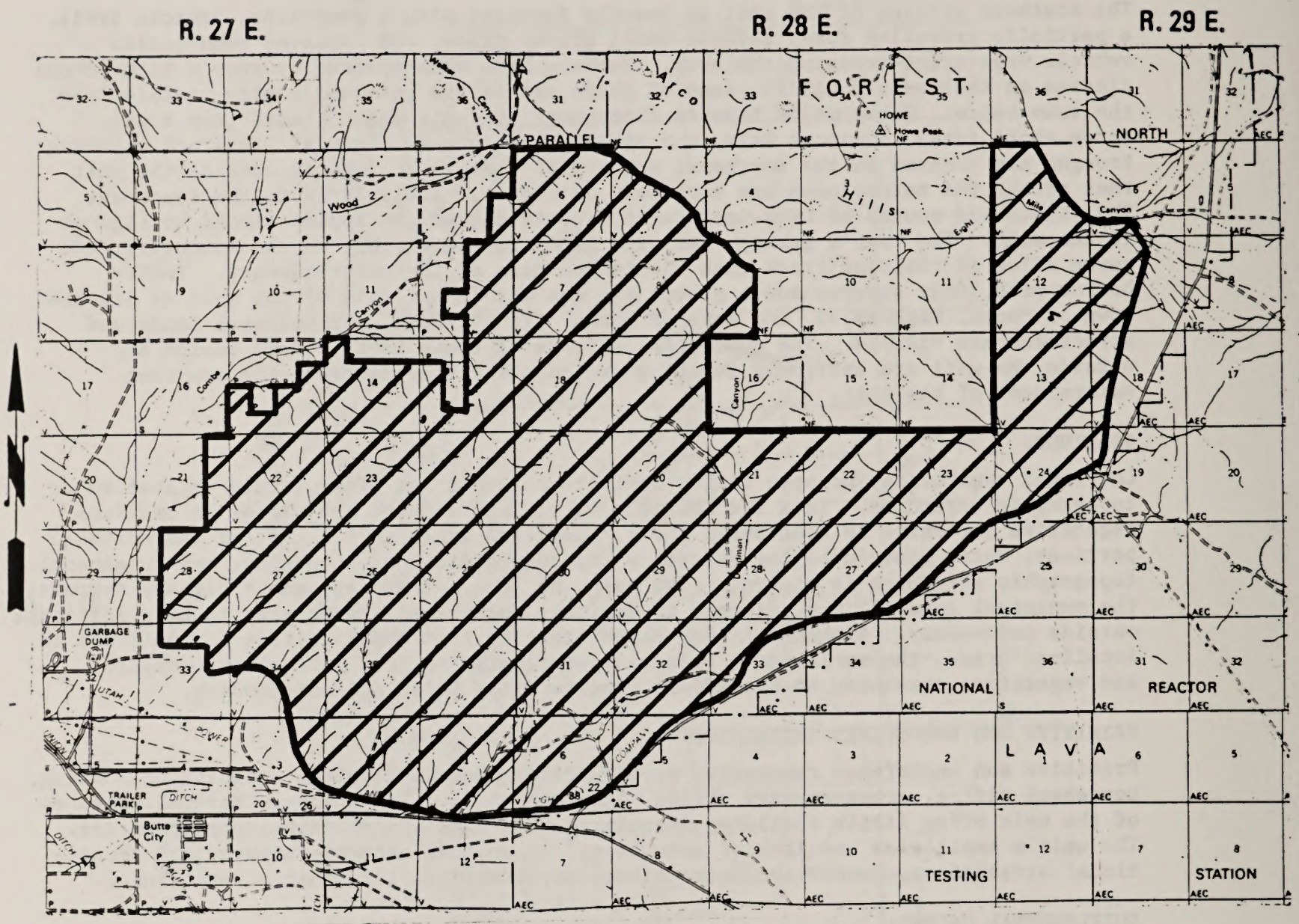
Comments agreed that the unit is not in a natural state, does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation and should not be identified as a study area.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, and to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

31–11
DEADMAN CANYON



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

31-11 DEADMAN CANYON

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 23,000 acres of BLM land with a 640-acre State land inholding and is located between the Little Lost and Big Lost River Valleys, northeast of Butte City. The unit is part of the southeastern foothills of the Lost River Mountain Range. It rises from an altitude of 5,300 feet at the southern border to 7,914 feet at the highest point. Relatively flat land surrounds it on the east, south, and west. Sagebrush and grasses cover the majority of the area, with junipers in scattered areas and some Douglas fir at higher elevations.

NATURALNESS:

The major impacts on naturalness within the unit are the numerous substantial vehicle ways which dead-end in the unit and in some cases bisect it. They are heavily used and can be found in nearly every drainage bottom. Off-road vehicle routes are located throughout the unit. Three groups of livestock watering troughs are located in the northwest portion along with several barbed wire fences. A small corral is located up Eight Mile Canyon. Outside influences are substantial to the south of the unit. Butte City is one mile from the unit, as is a large radio tower. Two powerlines follow the southern edge of the unit. Twenty borrow pits surround the unit close to its border. U. S. Route 20-26 runs along the entire southern edge of the unit with State Route 22-33 to the east and southeast. Department of Energy facilities, though distant, are visible to the east, as is agricultural activity to the west and south. Topographic and vegetative screening is insufficient to hide these imprints from casual observation. The unit does not appear to be affected primarily by natural processes.

SOLITUDE:

Desert shrubs and grasses dominate the unit and offer little vegetative screening. Screening is available in a few isolated areas where junipers and Douglas fir exist. Topographic screening is considered good in isolated areas to the north and in the central part of the unit, but in general is considered minimal for the unit as a whole. Man caused outside influences are visible from the western, southern, and eastern slopes and affect over half of the unit and appear to be significant. Although the unit is large, the irregular configuration and minimal topographic and vegetative screening do not afford opportunities for solitude that are considered outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities include hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. The unit lacks exceptional or outstanding natural features which attract primitive recreation activities. Therefore, opportunities for primitive recreation are considered less than outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The central portion of the unit has been identified as critical deer winter range. There are also geologic features of scenic value and educational importance. An archaeological site has been found near the unit, suggesting other sites within the unit's boundaries.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

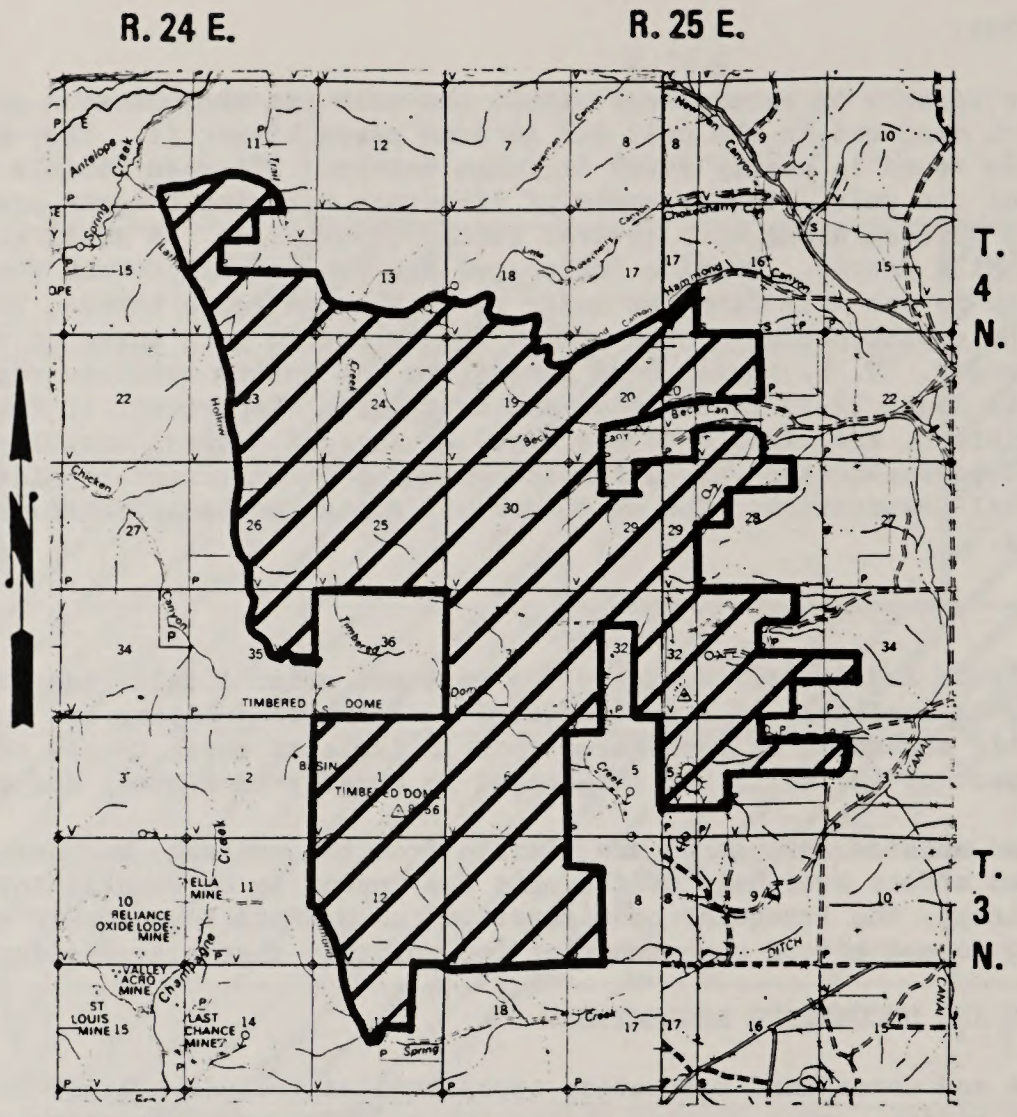
Comments agreed that the unit is not in a natural state, does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation, and should not be identified as a study area.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, and to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

31–13
TIMBERED DOME



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

31-13 TIMBERED DOME

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 10,240 acres of BLM land and is located in the Big Lost River Valley ten miles west of Arco. One State section forms a 3½ mile border on the west and is nearly surrounded by the unit. Very irregular borders characterize the unit, with narrow fingers of BLM land extending into adjacent private land. The unit contains foothills of the Pioneer Mountains including Timbered Dome, which rises to 8,356 feet. Several springs are contained within the unit, which feed deeply cut intermittent stream drainages. Some aspen stands cluster around the springs, and Douglas fir occurs near the top of Timbered Dome. Sagebrush and grasses form the dominant plant community.

NATURALNESS:

The major impacts within the unit are the numerous vehicle ways, which bisect or almost bisect the narrow unit and constitute a substantial impact on naturalness. Spring developments occur at four locations near the unit's core. Other impacts include a small garbage dump and livestock fences. The State section contains several substantial ways. Because of its central location within the unit, these ways are very apparent and appear to be in the heart of the area. Private land also projects into the unit creating a corridor less than 1/4 mile wide in the northern end. This private land contains fences, watering devices and vegetation visibly affected by grazing. Many vehicle ways, agricultural activity and structures and roads are clearly visible, particularly to the east. Major ways and off-road vehicle routes have affected most of the unit. Topographic and vegetative screening is insufficient to hide these imprints from casual observation. The unit does not appear to have been affected by the forces of nature.

SOLITUDE:

Vegetative screening is available only within the trees atop Timbered Dome and around the springs. Opportunities for solitude do exist deep in the canyons and high in some saddles where topographic relief could screen a visitor from others. This solitude is more difficult to encounter near the boundaries and outside the unit's canyons. The ways and other impacts in and around the unit are very difficult to avoid, and decrease the feeling of being remote or removed from others and their activities. Therefore, the unit does not contain outstanding opportunities for solitude because of its small size, irregular configuration, minimal topographic and vegetative screening and the general inability to avoid others and their activities.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities include camping, hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and horseback riding. These opportunities are limited to some extent by the presence of substantial vehicle ways, imposing outside influences and the unit's irregular configuration. Additionally, the unit's small size and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features render recreation opportunities less than outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit has high scenic values due largely to the topographic relief and interesting geologic features. Evidence of prehistoric archaeological sites has been found within the unit. The unit serves as important habitat for mule deer and black bear.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that indicated the unit should be a study area offered no supporting data. Other comments agreed that the unit was not in a natural state, did not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation and should not be identified as a study area.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

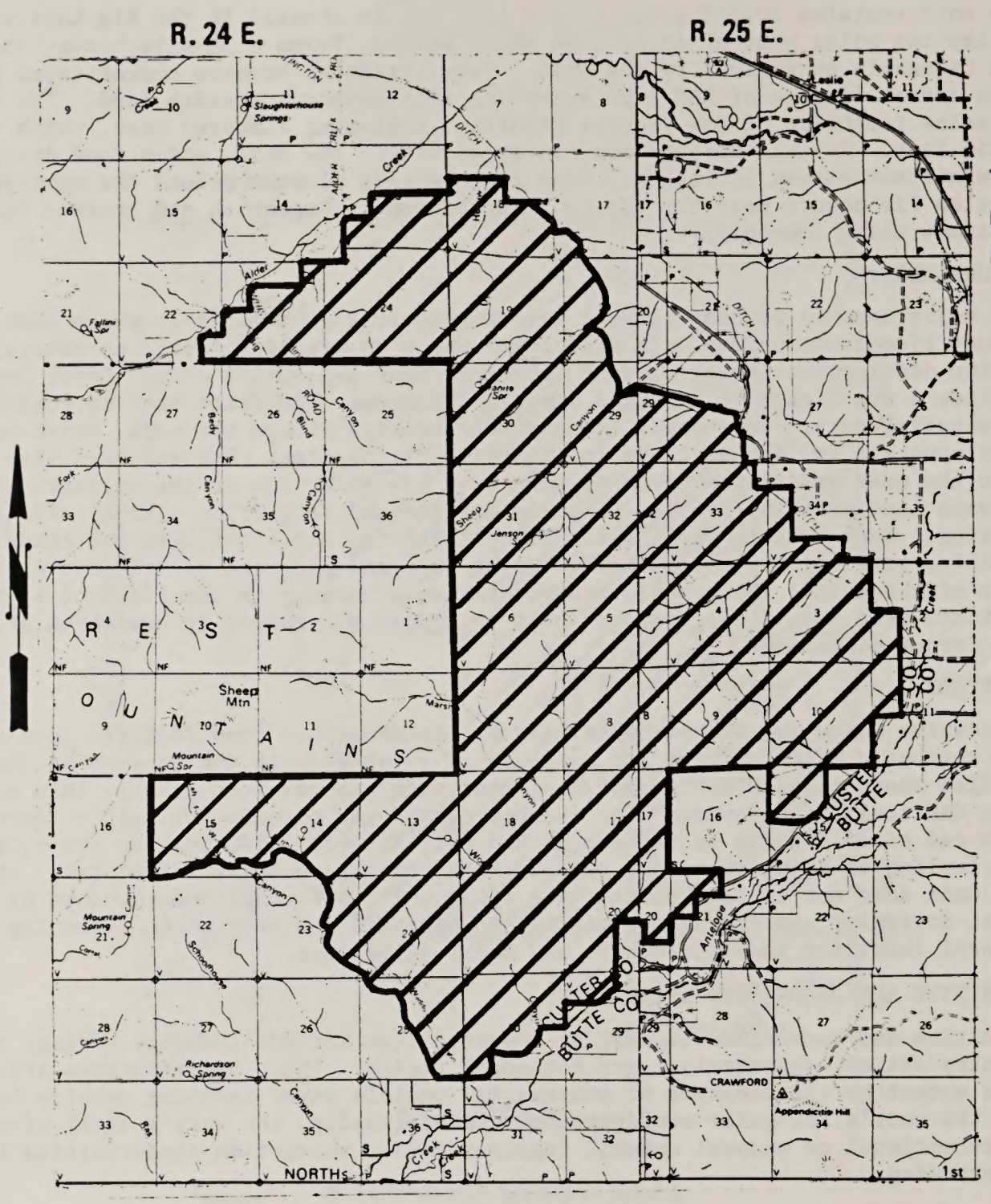
Comments either agreed with the proposed decision or did not show justification for further study.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, and to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

31–15
DRY HOLLOW



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

31-15 DRY HOLLOW

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 17,800 acres of BLM land and is situated east of the White Knob Mountains, three miles west of Darlington in the Big Lost River drainage. The unit is characterized by a foothill landscape with well defined drainages containing intermittent streams which contribute to Alder Creek, the Big Lost River, and Antelope Creek. The hills in the unit represent the easternmost extension of the White Knob Mountains. The higher elevations support scattered stands of Douglas fir while the remainder of the unit's vegetation is primarily sagebrush-grass. An occasional aspen-willow association can be found near active springs.

NATURALNESS:

Human imprints inside the unit consist of roads, vehicle ways, fences, two abandoned wells, a dump, watering troughs, cattle trails and a seeding. Ten miles of road penetrate the unit nearly bisecting it at five locations near the Forest Service boundary. Branching from these roads are 12 miles of ways. The way extending from the Marsh Canyon Road completely bisects the unit. Two abandoned mines occur in the unit. One is relatively small and hidden. The other is considerably more visible, including both horizontal and vertical shafts, adjacent slag mounds, and graded switchbacks leading 1/4 mile from the road. This mine and associated developments constitutes a substantial impact on naturalness. Impacts from grazing, though numerous are less obvious and often blend in with natural features. Six spring-trough developments are located within the unit. A livestock fence runs diagonally for more than a mile and forms the boundary between the unit and National Forest land. A small area of seeded grasses does not substantially affect apparent naturalness. A small revegetated borrow pit has been used as a dump. Its exposure is away from unit and contains very little trash. The overall impact of these developments appears significant. Topographic and vegetative screening is insufficient to hide these imprints from casual observation. The unit does not appear to have been affected primarily by natural processes.

SOLITUDE:

Desert shrubs dominate the unit and offer little vegetative screening. Some screening is available near the forest boundary where tree species are found near Jensen and Granite Springs. Topographic screening is good within the canyons, however, the major canyons contain improved and maintained roads which form the unit's irregular boundary. Outside influences, which are considered significant and are not well screened, include gravel pits, dumps, powerlines, irrigation ditches and agricultural lands. Although it may be possible to find opportunities for solitude in some small areas of the unit, the irregular configuration and minimal topographic and vegetative screening do not afford opportunities which are considered outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities include upland and big game hunting, camping, scenic photography, hiking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. The unit's lack of unusual or exceptional natural features and primitive recreation attractions render the recreational opportunities less than outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Areas within the unit have been identified as critical range for deer, and an abundance of raptors were sited during the inventory. Pictograph sites and surface lithic scatters found in the area indicate archaeological values exist.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that supported further study stated that the human imprints within the unit are minor and are not sufficient justification for dropping the unit. They pointed out that sagebrush-grasslands, riparian shrubs and aspen stands provide critical deer range and opportunities for a variety of primitive recreation activities and solitude. Comments also stated that if solitude or primitive recreation exist anywhere in the unit, the unit should be studied and that important archaeological sites were overlooked.

Other comments stated that the unit was not in a natural state, does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation and should not be identified as a study area.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

The unit does not meet the naturalness or solitude-recreation criteria. Human imprints are great enough, both individually and cumulatively, to significantly detract from the unit's apparent naturalness. Solitude is possible in small areas, but the unit's irregular configuration and minimal screening do not offer opportunities that are outstanding. Primitive recreation opportunities are less than outstanding due to the lack of exceptional recreation attractions. The unit's poor configuration and topography tend to confine recreation use to drainages where boundary roads are present.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, and to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

32-2 SANDS CANYON

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 8,010 acres of BLM land in a long, narrow configuration, and is located ten miles northwest of Howe. This unit encompasses a narrow portion of foothills of the Little Lost Mountains. Beginning at 5,600 ft. on the eastern border the hills rise to the west to 7,400 feet. This steeply rolling topography is cut by several scenic canyons, most notably the North Fork of Cedarville Canyon, Buck Canyon and Sands Canyon. The vegetation is comprised predominantly of sagebrush/bunchgrass. Mountain mahogany, Douglas fir and juniper occur in higher elevations and moist draws or aspects. Some aspen is also found in the larger canyon bottoms.

NATURALNESS:

Approximately eight miles of vehicle ways form the major impact on this unit. Four ways bisect the narrow area, the longest travels 1½ miles up the North Fork of Cedarville Canyon between the southern and western borders. Another way bisects the unit from east to west through Sands Canyon. Other ways are located in Buck and Bird Canyons. All the remaining ways enter the unit for short distances and dead-end. The cumulative impact of these eroded and substantial ways significantly detracts from the unit's naturalness. Three fence lines also enter the unit for short distances. External influences are not considered significant. Major ways and off-road vehicle routes have affected all of the unit's canyons and drainages. Topographic and vegetative screening is insufficient to hide these imprints from casual observation inside this small and narrow unit. The unit does not appear to have been affected primarily by natural processes.

SOLITUDE:

Vegetative screening is moderately good in the western portion of the unit due to scattered clumps of trees. It is fair in the rest of the unit where tree cover is sparse. Topographic screening is moderate to good where dominate ridges are broken by a number of small draws and spur ridges. The unit's terrain and vegetation are sufficient to provide a moderately good opportunity for solitude. However, in considering the small size and poor configuration, the unit does not provide an opportunity for solitude that is considered outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive recreational opportunities include rock climbing, hunting, hiking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. The unit's small size and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreational attractions render the primitive recreation opportunties less than outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The eastern portion of the unit is crucial for antelope as a fawning ground and winter range. This same area is also winter range for sage grouse and mule deer. A threatened plant, the Idaho Bladderpod is found in the unit. The unit is also of important archaeological value; rock shelters with pictographs, hunting blinds and surface lithic scatters occur in this area.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that supported further wilderness study, stated that the vehicle ways and fence lines are not valid criteria for dropping the unit. They felt that outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation exist within the unit, and that the human imprints cannot be judged serious in comparison to the enjoyment of the unit for its scenic and recreational values. Others said cross-country skiing in the area is an unforgettable experience, or pointed out important wildlife and archaeological values.

Other comments agreed that the unit was not in a natural state, did not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation, and should not be identified as a study area.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

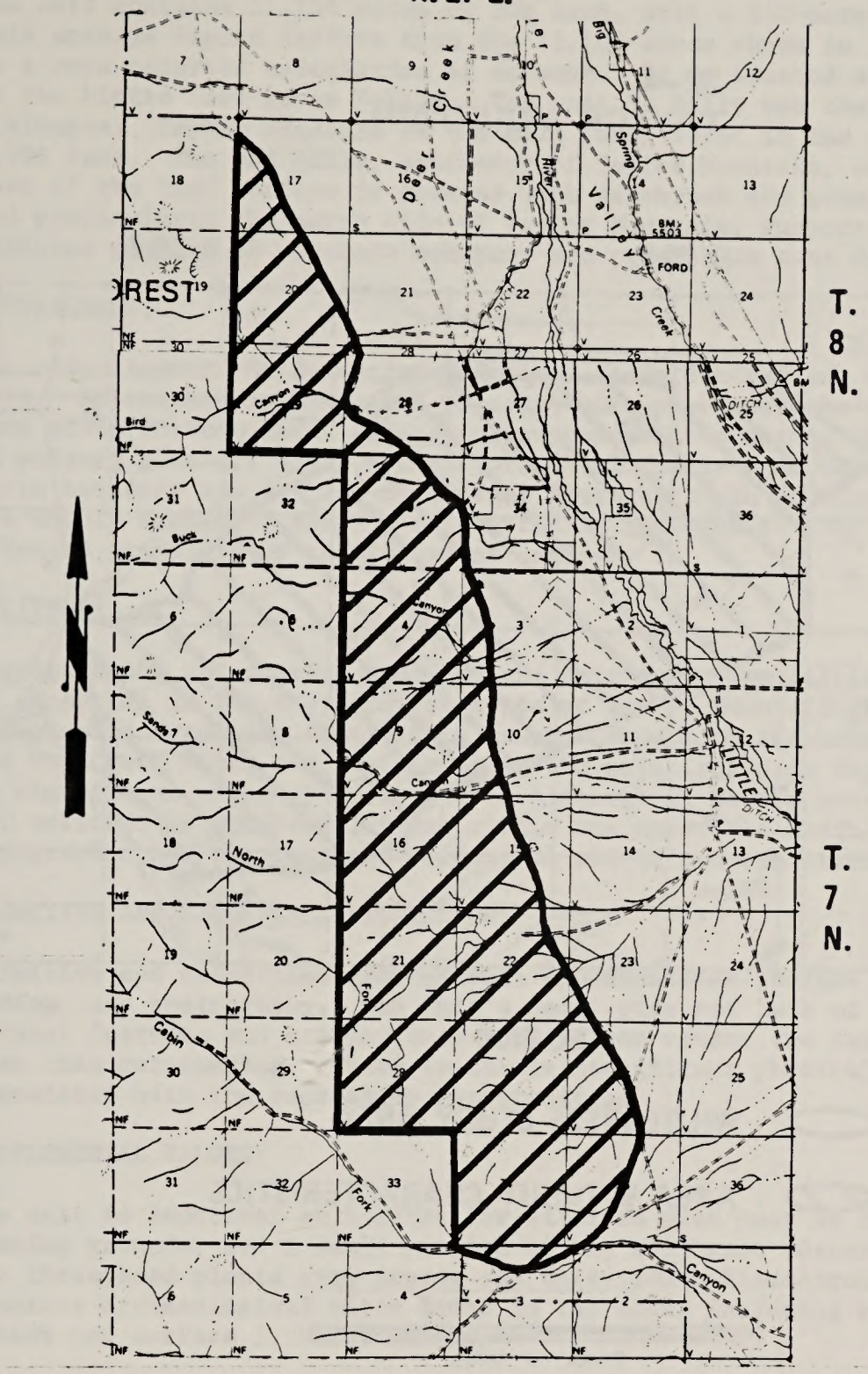
The unit does not meet the naturalness criteria. Human imprints, particularly the vehicle ways, are quite substantial and noticeable in every canyon and access point in the unit. Solitude is possible in some areas but the unit's small size and poor configuration do not offer outstanding opportunities. Primitive recreation is also present but cannot be considered outstanding. Physical features which attract primitive recreation use are not exceptional. The small size, poor configuration and topography would also be confining to users.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, and to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

32–2
SANDS CANYON



LEGEND

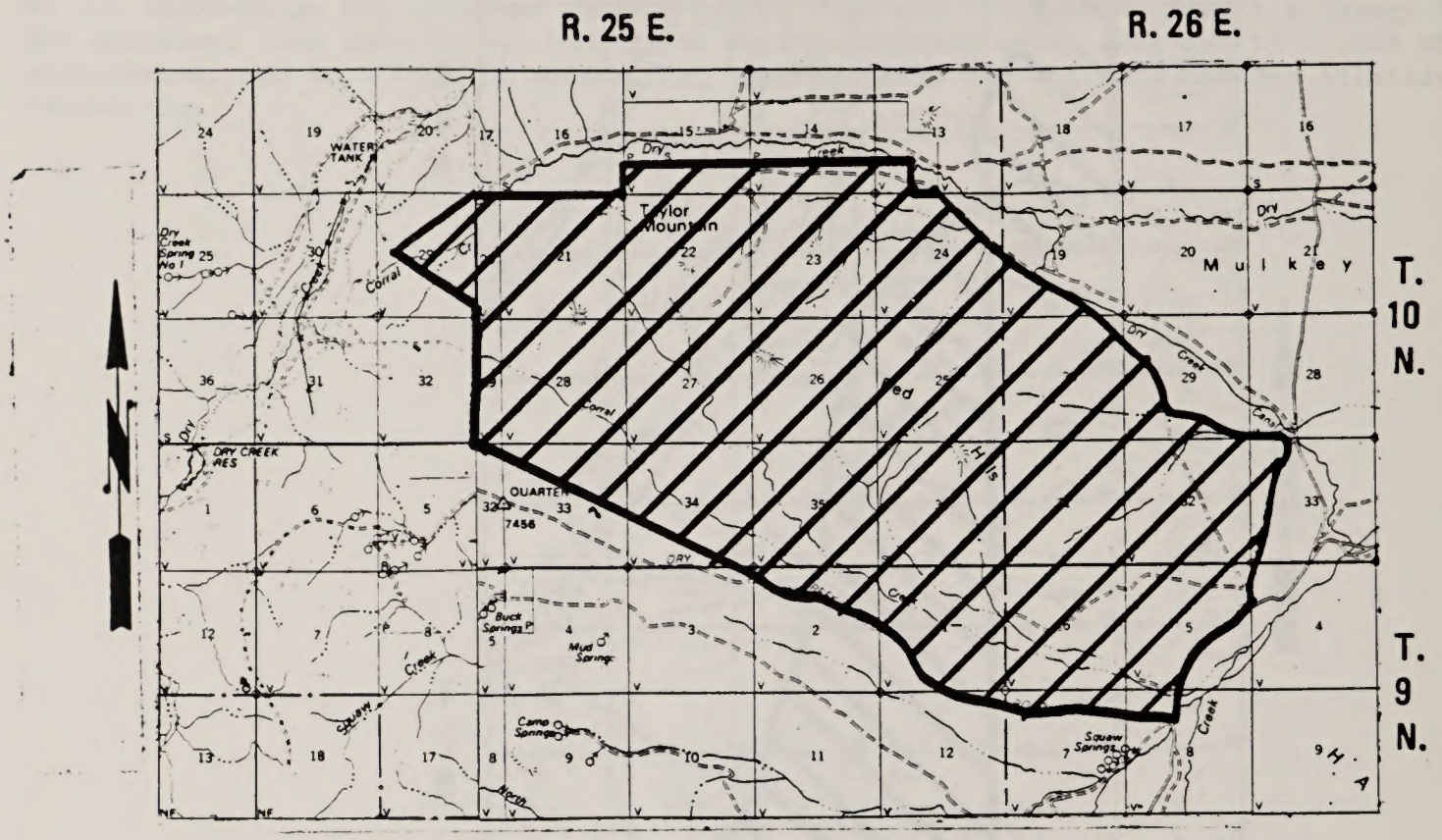
WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

32–4
TAYLOR MOUNTAIN



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

32-4 TAYLOR MOUNTAIN

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 11,134 acres of BLM land, with a 640-acre inholding of State land. This acreage figure differs from the 11,160 acres shown in the August 1979 report due to a more accurate calculation of acreage. It is located six miles west of Clyde in the Little Lost River Valley. The unit is hilly and characterized by well defined drainages. Taylor Mountain is the main focal point in the unit, rising to nearly 8,700 feet. The Red Hills, southeast of Taylor Mountain, occupy 2/3 of the unit. Most of the land surface is covered with sagebrush and grasses. The higher elevations, and particularly the north side of Taylor Mountain, support Douglas fir and junipers. Isolated pockets of mountain mahogany are present in some drainages and on higher slopes.

NATURALNESS:

The major impacts on naturalness include livestock fences, watering developments and ways. Approximately ten miles of ways skirt or bisect the unit. One encircles the base of Taylor Mountain, others follow fence lines within the unit or provide short cuts on eastern boundary roads. Livestock developments include watering troughs along the north boundary and a three-mile fence near the south boundary. Most of these impacts are widely scattered and not substantially noticeable. The unit appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature.

SOLITUDE:

Desert shrubs and grasses dominate the unit and offer little vegetative screening. An exception is the north facing slope of Taylor Mountain where tree species occur. Topographic screening is moderate to poor except on the north side of Taylor Mountain. The Dry Creek Flume and traffic along the major roads to the north and east appear to be significant external influences. Although it may be possible to find opportunities for solitude in some small areas within the unit, the small size and minimal topographic and vegetative screening do not afford opportunities that are outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive and unconfined recreational opportunities include camping, hiking, horseback riding, and photography. The unit's small size and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreational attractions render the recreation opportunities less than outstanding. There is little significant physical and mental challenge associated with the recreation opportunities.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit is important as habitat for wildlife with most of the unit identified as antelope fawning grounds, and a small portion of the southeast corner antelope winter range. Two threatened plants grow inside the unit; Idaho Bladderpod and Invested Cryptantha. Numerous archaeological sites exist in the unit, including rock shelters, hunting blinds and surface lithic scatters.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that disagreed that the unit lacks outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation stated that the small size, minimal topographic and vegetative screening, and external influences should not be considered as factors which render these opportunities less than outstanding. The unit's wildlife habitat and archaeological sites were pointed out as important supplemental values.

Other comments said the unit does not appear natural, lacks outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and should not be a study area.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Reevaluation shows that the unit does not meet the solitude-recreation criteria. Opportunities for solitude are limited, due to the unit's small size and minimal topographic and vegetative screening. Primitive recreation opportunities are limited due to the lack of exceptional recreation attractions. The most prominent natural feature is Taylor Mountain which is mostly contained within an adjacent State section. This State land was not evaluated with the rest of the unit.

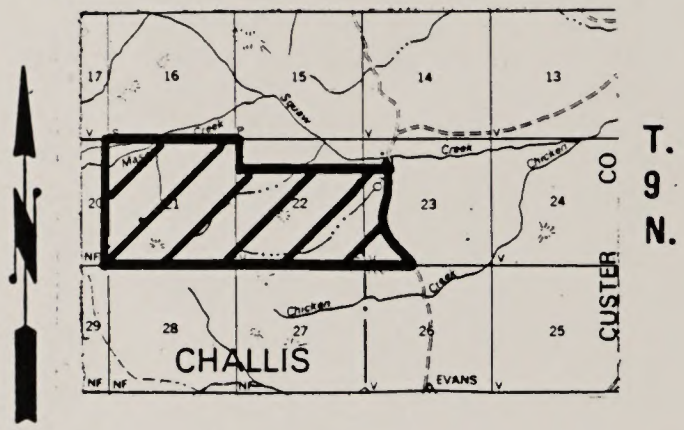
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DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

32–16
PASS CREEK

R. 25 E.



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

32-16 PASS CREEK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Unit 32-16 was identified in the August 1979 report as containing 11,330 acres, in two parcels. The larger, northernmost parcel is now being evaluated as part of Unit 45-12 with the Salmon District narrative, due to a reevaluation of a previously identified road separating Units 32-16 and 45-12. The southernmost parcel contains 1,220 acres and is covered below as Unit 32-16.

The unit contains 1,220 acres of BLM land and lies 12 miles west of Clyde in the northwest portion of the Little Lost Valley. It is 3/4 - 1 mile wide and 2 1/4 miles long and is adjacent to the Forest Service Borah Peak wilderness proposal on its one mile western boundary. The parcel creates a narrow peninsula which extends from the Borah Peak area and is not considered of sufficient size to be managed in an unimpaired condition.

NATURALNESS:

Man-made imprints within the unit are not substantial. The area appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature.

SOLITUDE:

Topographic and vegetative screening in the unit are considered minimal and render opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive recreation opportunities within the unit include hiking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, camping and backpacking. However, these opportunities are considered less than outstanding due to the narrow configuration. Additionally, this unit lacks exceptional or unusual natural features and recreational attractions.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comment received on this unit agreed with the proposed decision to drop it from further wilderness consideration, stating a lack of naturalness.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

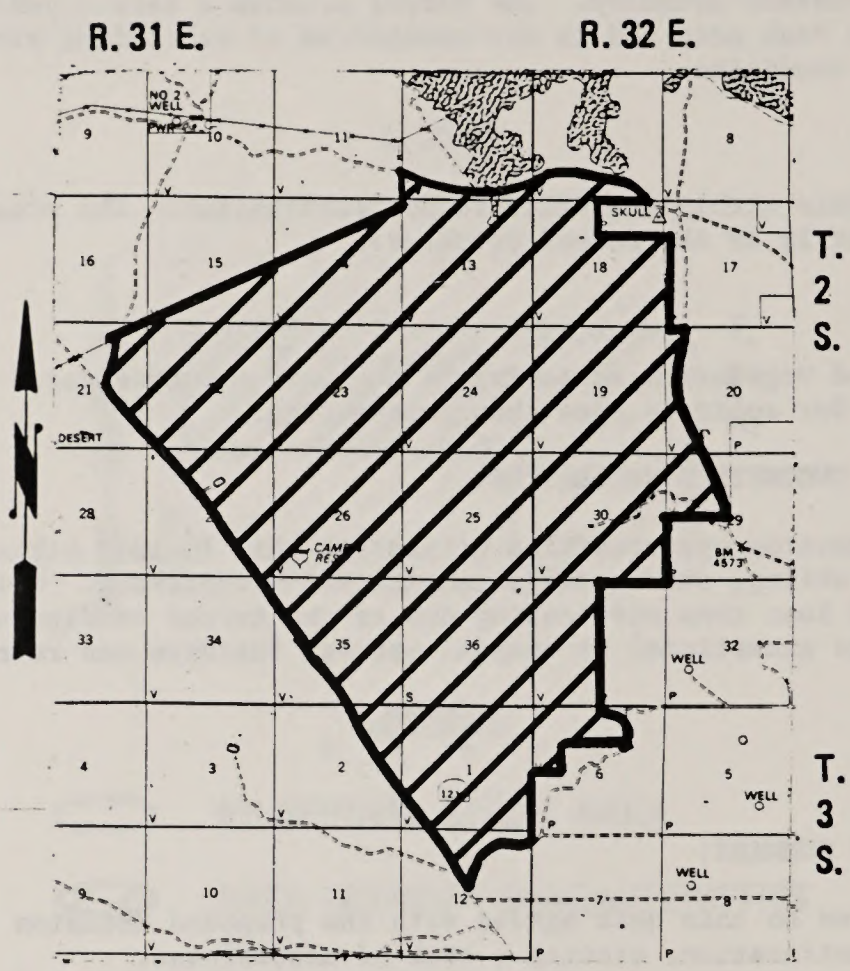
Contrary to public comment, the unit does retain a natural appearance, but is lacking in other required criteria.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

33–5
SKULL



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 8,650 acres of BLM land with a 640-acre State inholding, and is located 13 miles south of Atomic City and 12 miles southeast of Big Southern Butte. The unit lacks significant topographic relief, varying a maximum of 200 feet. Vegetation is largely sagebrush with grass species dominating in those areas that have been subjected to brush control.

NATURALNESS:

The most significant impacts within the unit are vehicle trails. Over 11 miles of ways occur in the unit, with two of them bisecting the area from east to west. These ways vary, with some approaching the definition of a road while others are faint and appear to receive infrequent use. Camp Reservoir, on the western border, is a small development with minimal impact. A 640-acre brush control project has some effect on the naturalness of this area. Agricultural use around Moreland is visible from the unit, but the view is not imposing.

SOLITUDE:

Opportunities for experiencing solitude in this unit are limited by the lack of vegetative or topographic screening. Vehicles traveling the border roads can be seen or heard from nearly every point. There is only a limited opportunity to avoid the activities of others within the unit. The small size and lack of vegetative and topographic screening do not afford opportunities that are outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities include hiking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing and upland game bird hunting. The unit's small size and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions render the recreation opportunities less than outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The western border of this unit is of historical and anthropological value. Before the pioneers moved west, this route was an Indian trail. Archaeologists believe there are several significant sites along it. During pioneer times this road was known as Goodale's Cutoff, an alternate northern route for the Oregon Trail between Fort Hall and Boise.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that agreed that the unit should not receive further study stated that naturalness is lacking and solitude-recreation is marginal.

Other comments supported further study, disagreeing that the unit lacks naturalness and does not offer opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. Some felt that the unit's small size, minimal topographic and vegetative screening, and lack of natural features do not limit solitude-recreation opportunities and therefore, are not justifiable reasons for dropping the unit. Other comments said that the unit should be evaluated together with two adjacent units.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

The unit cannot be evaluated as one with two adjacent units since they are separated by roads which meet the BLM's road definition. Reevaluation showed that the unit does not meet the naturalness or solitude-recreation criteria. Human imprints are great enough, both individually and cumulatively to detract from the unit's apparent naturalness.

Opportunities for solitude are limited, due to the unit's small size and minimal topographic and vegetative screening. The lack of screening increases the probability of encountering others within the unit and decreases the opportunity to avoid visual and audible contact with activities outside the unit. This unit is small and lacks the physical characteristics that provide outstanding opportunities for solitude.

Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are dependent on the area's size and/or natural features that attract primitive use. The unit lacks physical features which attract primitive recreation.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, and a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

33-6 RYE GRASS

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 8,000 acres of BLM land. This acreage figure differs from the 9,150 acres shown in the August 1979 report due to a more accurate calculation of acreage. It is located 12 miles southeast of Big Southern Butte and 14 miles south of Atomic City. This area is generally flat with no more than 300 ft. in elevation change over the entire unit. The vegetative community consists mainly of sagebrush and grasses. Non-native grass species occur in areas that have been subjected to brush control and artificial plantings. These areas contrast dramatically with the sagebrush dominated areas.

NATURALNESS:

Vehicle ways are the major impact in the unit. Nine and one-half miles of ways enter the unit, the most substantial trail is six miles long and bisects the unit on a meandering east-west path. There are two small reservoirs in the southeast portion of the unit. A 3,200-acre brush control project within the area has a significant affect on naturalness. The borders between the controlled areas and the sage dominated areas are abrupt and unnaturally linear. Topographic and vegetative screening is insufficient to hide these imprints from casual observation. The unit does not appear to have been affected primarily by natural processes.

SOLITUDE:

Desert shrubs and grasses dominate the unit and offer little vegetative screening. Topographic screening is considered minimal throughout the unit. Vehicles traveling the border roads can be seen or heard from nearly every point within the unit and are considered significant outside influences. The unit's small size and lack of vegetative and topographic screening do not afford opportunities that are outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities include hiking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing and upland game bird hunting. The unit's small size and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions render the recreation opportunities less than outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The eastern border road is of both historical and anthropological value. The road, known as Goodale's Cutoff, was an alternative northern route for the Oregon Trail between Fort Hall and Boise. Before the pioneers moved west this same route was an Indian trail. Archaeologists believe this route has several significant sites scattered along it.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that agreed that the unit should not receive further study stated that naturalness is lacking and solitude-recreation is marginal.

Other comments supported further study, disagreeing that the unit lacks naturalness and does not offer opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. Some felt that the unit's small size, minimal topographic and vegetative screening, and lack of natural features do not limit solitude-recreation opportunities and therefore, are not justifiable reasons for dropping the unit. Other comments said that the unit should be evaluated together with two adjacent units.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

The unit cannot be evaluated as one with two adjacent units since they are separated by roads which meet the BLM's road definition. Reevaluation showed that the unit does not meet the naturalness or solitude-recreation criteria. Human imprints are great enough, both individually and cumulatively to detract from the unit's apparent naturalness.

Opportunities for solitude are limited, due to the unit's small size and minimal topographic and vegetative screening. The lack of screening increases the probability of encountering others within the unit and decreases the opportunity to avoid visual and audible contact with activities outside the unit. This unit is small and lacks the physical characteristics that provide outstanding opportunities for solitude.

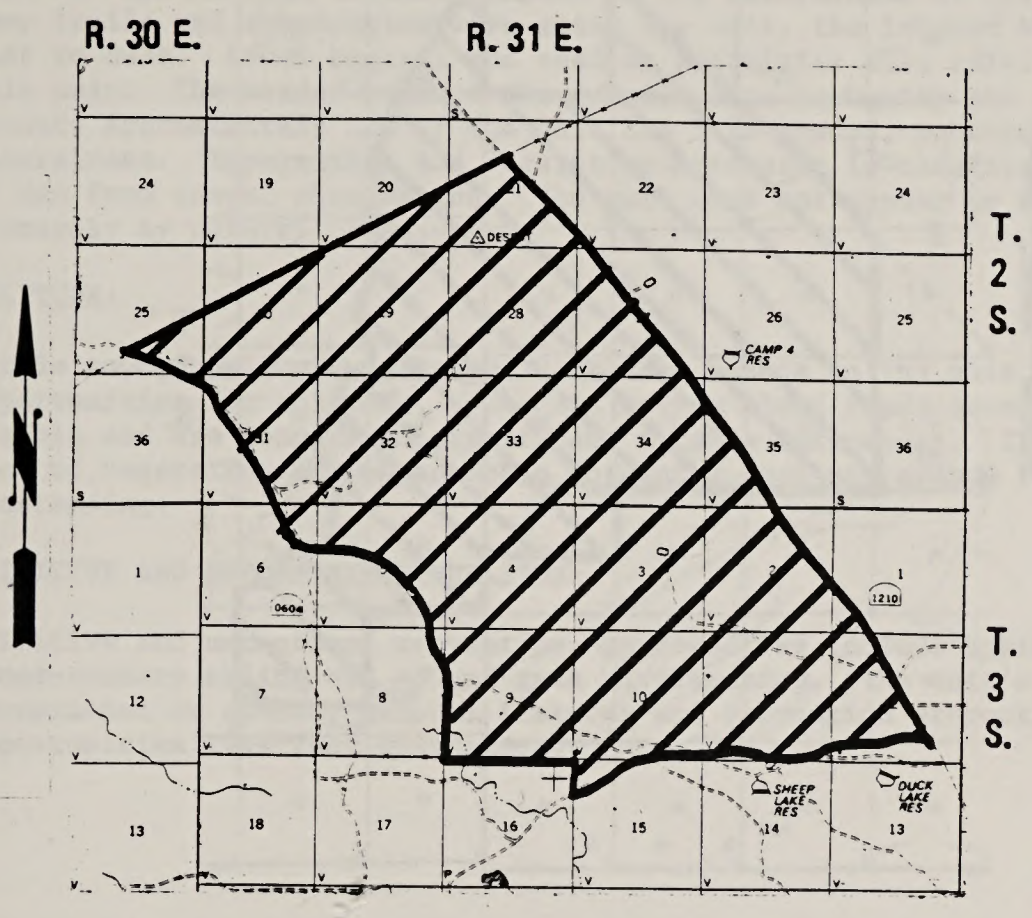
Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are dependent on the area's size and/or natural features that attract primitive use. The unit lacks physical features which attract primitive recreation.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, and a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

33–6
RYE GRASS



LEGEND

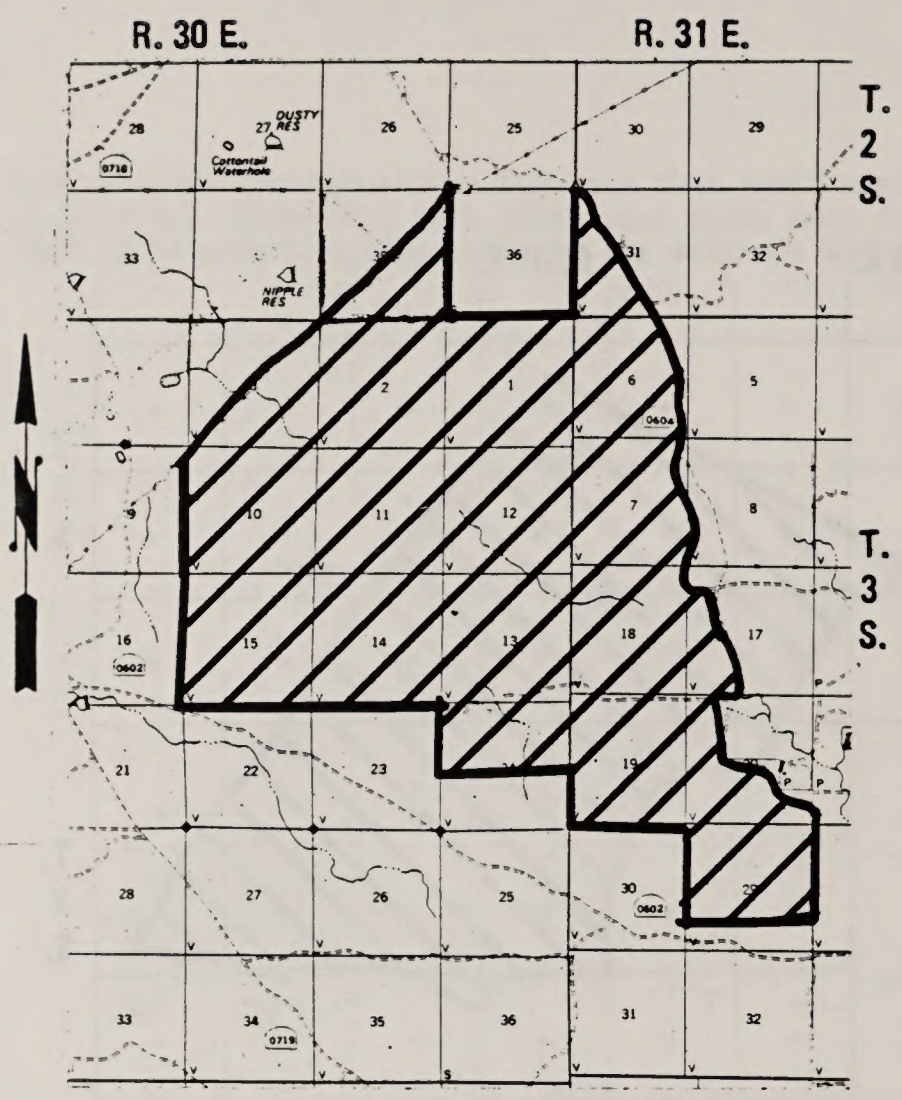
WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

33–7
COTTONTAIL



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 9,300 acres of BLM land. This acreage figure differs from the 8,300 acres shown in the August 1979 report due to a typographical error in the August report. The unit is approximately 12 miles south of Big Southern Butte and 14 miles southwest of Atomic City. This unit has little topographic relief, varying a maximum of 300 feet. The area is dominated by low sagebrush with little other vegetation. Part of the unit has undergone brush control and seedings of crested wheatgrass, with these areas contrasting dramatically to the sage-dominated communities.

NATURALNESS:

Vehicle ways are the dominant impact on the naturalness of this unit. Seven miles of jeep trails and substantial ways enter the unit, the longest bisects the unit from east to west. Brush control and seeding activities also affect the naturalness of this unit. The border between the natural sage community and manipulated areas is abrupt. Approximately 1/3 of the unit has been seeded, substantially affecting apparent naturalness. Topographic and vegetative screening is insufficient to hide these imprints of man from casual observation. The unit does not appear to have been affected primarily by natural processes.

SOLITUDE:

Little topographic or vegetative screening occurs in the unit, significantly limiting opportunities for solitude. Vehicles moving along roads around the unit are clearly visible and are considered significant outside influences. The unit's small size and lack of vegetative and topographic screening does not afford opportunities that are outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities include hiking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing and upland game bird hunting. The unit's small size and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions render the recreation opportunities less than outstanding.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that agreed that the unit should not receive further study stated that naturalness is lacking and solitude-recreation is marginal.

Other comments supported further study, disagreeing that the unit lacks naturalness and does not offer opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. Some felt that the unit's small size, minimal topographic and vegetative screening and lack of natural features do not limit solitude-recreation opportunities and therefore, are not justifiable reasons for dropping the unit. Other comments said that the unit should be evaluated together with two adjacent units.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

The unit cannot be evaluated as one with two adjacent units since they are separated by roads which meet the BLM's road definition. Reevaluation showed that the unit does not meet the naturalness or solitude-recreation criteria. Human imprints are great enough, both individually and cumulatively to detract from the unit's apparent naturalness.

Opportunities for solitude are limited, due to the unit's small size and minimal topographic and vegetative screening. The lack of screening increases the probability of encountering others within the unit and decreases the opportunity to avoid visual and audible contact with activities outside the unit. This unit is small and lacks the physical characteristics that provide outstanding opportunities for solitude.

Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are dependent on the area's size and/or natural features that attract primitive use. The unit lacks physical features which attract primitive recreation.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, and a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

33-12 SPLIT TOP

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 18,080 acres of BLM land, with a State land inholding of 640 acres. It is located 27 miles southeast of Arco and 25 miles northwest of American Falls. The topography of the unit is flat or gently rolling with the most prominent feature being the 5,563 ft. Split Top Butte which rises 200 ft. above the surrounding plain. Lava features such as caves, lava tubes and volcanic uplift areas occur throughout the unit. Because of the limited precipitation characteristic of this desert environment, vegetation in the unit is sparse. Big sagebrush is the dominant plant, with a variety of bunchgrasses and forbs scattered throughout the area. In some portions of the unit the natural vegetation has been replaced by artificially planted non-native grasses.

NATURALNESS:

Approximately 24 miles of vehicle ways form a major impact on the naturalness of this unit. These ways vary from faint jeep tracks to deeply rutted and frequently used access routes that are very substantial in nature. They criss-cross and bisect all portions of the unit. In the eastern half vegetation has been heavily impacted by brush control measures and mechanical seeding with crested wheatgrass. The linear nature of the seedings between sagebrush and grass creates an unnatural pattern and a substantial impact on the apparent naturalness of the unit. Seven miles of fence in the unit have a minimal impact on the area's naturalness. Major ways, off-road vehicle routes and man-caused vegetative changes have affected most of the unit. Topographic and vegetative screening is insufficient to hide these imprints of man from casual observation. The unit does not appear to have been affected primarily by natural processes.

SOLITUDE:

Desert shrubs and grasses dominate the unit and offer little vegetative screening. Topographic screening is considered minimal throughout the unit. Vehicles traveling the border roads can be seen from a large percentage of the unit and are considered significant outside influences. The unit's lack of topographic and vegetative screening does not afford opportunities that are outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

This unit provides excellent opportunities for a diversity of primitive recreation activities. The presence of several caves and collapsed lava tubes within the unit provide outstanding opportunities for spelunking. The rolling topography also provides good opportunities for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing in the winter as well as hiking and horseback riding during the summer months.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Archaeologists have identified several surface lithic scatter sites as well as rock shelters.

This unit has also been identified as critical winter habitat for sage grouse and pronghorn antelope. The unit has several caves, lava tubes and other volcanic features which are important geological, educational and scenic resources.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that supported further wilderness study felt that the vehicle ways, brush control measures and seedings were not justifiable reasons for dropping the unit. They stated that more consideration should be given to the prospect of allowing time for nature to heal these impacts. Also mentioned were opportunities for solitude and recreation and supplemental values. Other comments stated that the unit is not in a natural state, does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation and should not be identified as a study area.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

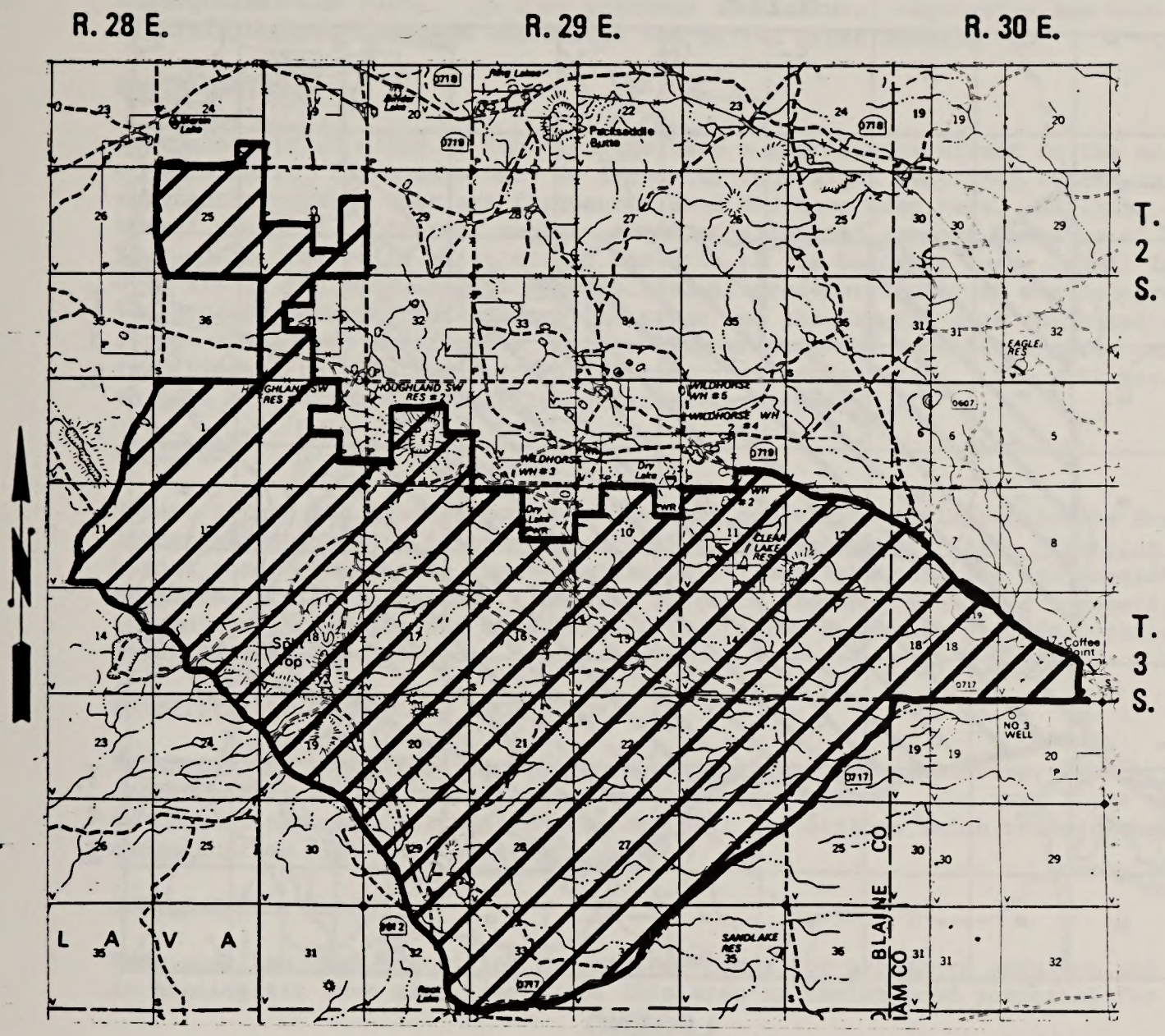
The unit does not meet the naturalness criteria. Vehicle ways, brush control measures and seedings significantly detract from the apparent naturalness of the unit. Comments suggested that the unit be evaluated based on the prospect of allowing time for nature to heal these impacts. This could only take place if the unit as a whole met the naturalness criteria; small areas could be considered for rehabilitation through natural processes or hand labor.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, and a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude.

33–12
SPLIT TOP



LEGEND

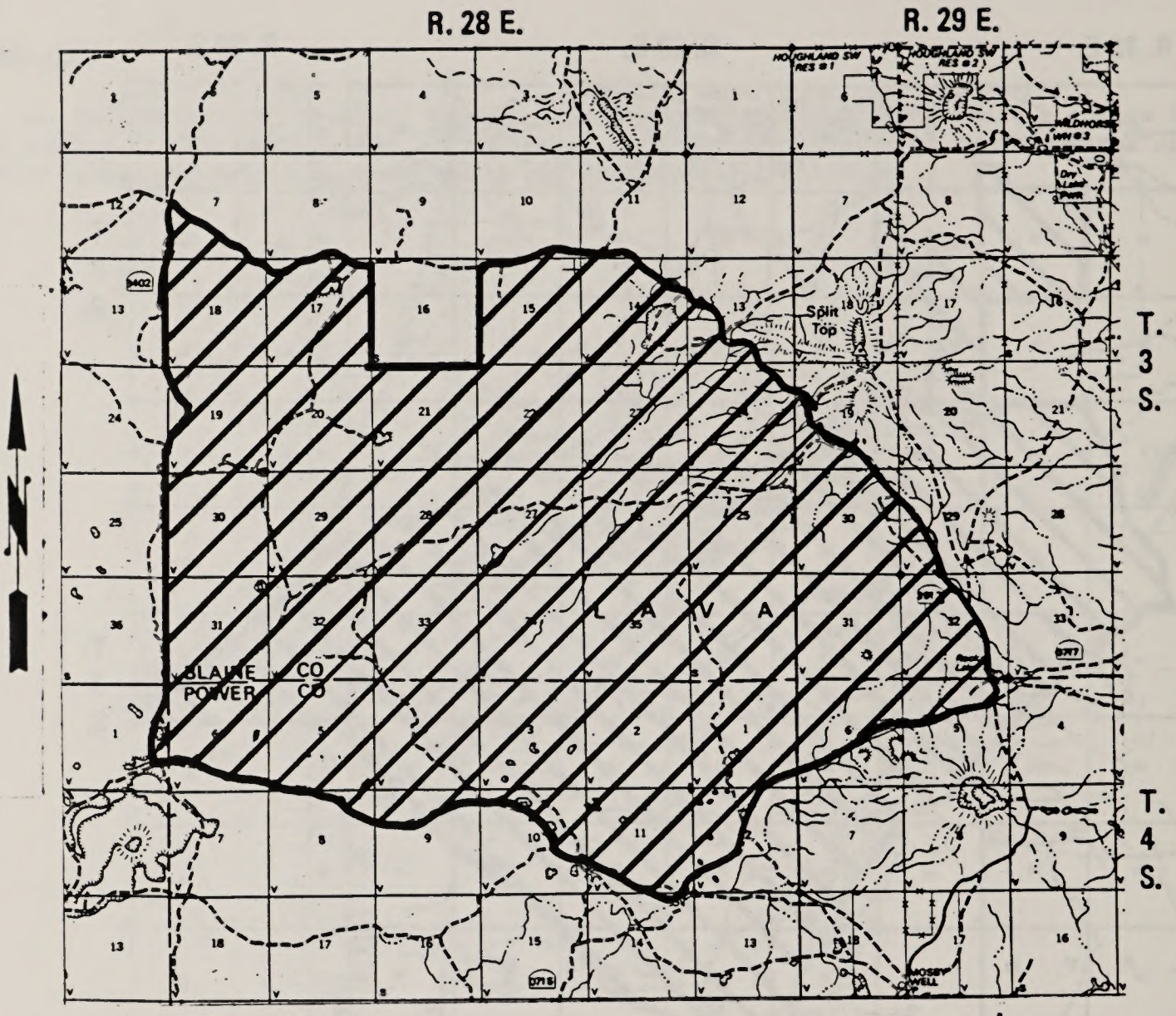
WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

33–13
BEAR POINT



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

33-13 BEAR POINT

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 20,650 acres of BLM land, with a 640-acre state inholding. It is located approximately 15 miles southwest of Big Southern Butte. The topography of the unit is gently rolling with a maximum elevational difference of 400 feet. Several lava outcrops occur throughout the unit. A segment of the Great Rift fracture extends over two miles into the northwest corner. The vegetation is a result of low annual precipitation; Big Desert sagebrush is the predominant species, with a mixture of bunchgrasses and forbs. In some portions this natural vegetation has been interrupted by artificial seedings of introduced non-native grass species.

NATURALNESS:

Approximately 20 miles of vehicle ways have a significant effect on the naturalness of this unit. These ways vary in intensity from light duty jeep tracks to very substantial trails that are frequently used and have deep ruts. At least four ways bisect the unit. Off-road vehicle trails are located in most sections of the unit. Four small reservoirs exist within one mile of the boundary roads on all four sides. Over 1/4 of the unit, vegetation has been altered through brush control projects. The borders between these controlled areas and the natural sage dominated areas are abrupt and appear unnaturally linear. Topographic and vegetative screening is insufficient to hide these imprints from casual observation. The unit does not appear to have been affected primarily by natural processes.

SOLITUDE:

Desert shrubs and grasses dominate the unit and offer little vegetative screening. Topographic screening is considered minimal throughout the unit. Vehicles traveling border roads can be seen from approximately 1/4 of the unit and are considered moderate outside influences. Despite the lack of topographic and vegetative screening, the unit's large size and excellent configuration appear to provide outstanding opportunities for solitude.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities include hunting, hiking, backpacking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and horseback riding. The unit lacks exceptional or unusual natural features and recreational attractions which renders the recreation opportunities less than outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

This unit has been identified as critical range for pronghorn antelope and sage grouse. Archaeologists have also identified this area as having good potential for sites.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that supported further wilderness study stated that the vehicle ways, brush control measures, seedings and reservoirs were not justifiable reasons for dropping the unit. They stated that more consideration should be given to the prospect of allowing time for nature to heal these impacts. Others pointed out that litter should not be regarded as a problem beyond solution. Also mentioned were outstanding opportunities for solitude-recreation and that these values should outweigh the minimal impacts on naturalness. Other comments stated that the unit is not natural, does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation and should not be identified as a study area.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

The unit does not meet the naturalness criteria. Human imprints, particularly the vehicle ways and linear seedings, are very apparent throughout the unit.

Comments suggested that the unit be evaluated based on the prospect of allowing time for nature to heal the human imprints. This could only take place if the unit as a whole met the naturalness criteria; small areas could be considered for rehabilitation through natural processes or hand labor.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, and a lack of outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation.

33-14 MOSBY BUTTE

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 35,720 acres of BLM land with two State sections as inholdings. The eastern boundary is 19 miles west of American Falls Reservoir. Topography in the unit is generally flat with occasional rises, interrupted periodically by volcanic exposures and collapsed lava tubes. Major landmarks in the unit include Bear Trap Lava Tube, Cottrell's Blowout, Inferno Chasm, Horse Butte, Sullivan's Cave, and Mosby Butte. Due to an average annual rainfall of 11-13 inches, vegetation is limited to sagebrush and grasses.

NATURALNESS:

The predominant human imprint in the unit is the presence of vehicle ways, the cumulative impact of which is extremely substantial. Some ways, particularly those leading to livestock watering areas, are well used routes. Extending over 50 miles the ways form a complex network of loops, dead ends and multiple routes which criss-cross and bisect the unit. The impact is most noticeable in the unit's southern portion where the highest concentration occurs. Garbage has been dumped in Inferno Chasm, a frequently visited spot, and adversely affects the natural appearance of this important geologic feature. Brush control, seedings, and livestock reservoirs are present but do not substantially affect the apparent naturalness due to their small size in comparison to the size of the unit. Major ways and off-road vehicle routes have affected most of the unit. Topographic and vegetative screening is insufficient to hide these imprints from casual observation. The unit does not appear to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature.

SOLITUDE:

Desert shrubs and grasses dominate the unit and offer little vegetative screening. Topographic screening is considered minimal throughout the unit. Traffic on the major roads which form the boundaries affects only peripheral areas and is not considered a substantial external influence. Despite the lack of topographic and vegetative screening, the unit's large size and good configuration appear to provide outstanding opportunities for solitude.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities include hunting, hiking, backpacking, cross-country skiing, spelunking and photography. The unusual and exceptional volcanic features such as lava tubes, cinder cones, and caves provide recreational attractions which offer outstanding opportunities.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Bear Trap Lava Tube, Creon's Cave, Cottrell's Blowout, Inferno Chasm, and Horse Butte are prominent geologic features which possess educational and scenic values. The entire unit has been identified as a sage grouse booming ground and brood-rearing area. The west side of the unit is considered critical antelope range. The unit contains areas of archaeological significance, with surface lithic scatters in the vicinity of Bear Trip Cave.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that supported further wilderness study stated that the complex of vehicle ways and other human imprints were not justifiable reasons for dropping the unit. They stated that more consideration should be given to the prospect of allowing time to heal these impacts. Others pointed out that litter should not be regarded as a problem beyond solution. Also mentioned were outstanding opportunities for solitude-recreation and that these values should outweigh the minimal impacts on naturalness.

Other comments said the unit is not natural, does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation, and should not be identified as a study area.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

The unit does not meet the naturalness criteria. Human imprints, particularly the complex network of vehicle ways, are very apparent throughout the entire unit.

Comments suggested that the unit be evaluated based on the prospect of allowing time for nature to heal the human imprints. This could only take place if the unit as a whole met the naturalness criteria; small areas could be considered for rehabilitation through natural processes or hand labor.

* * *

DECISION:

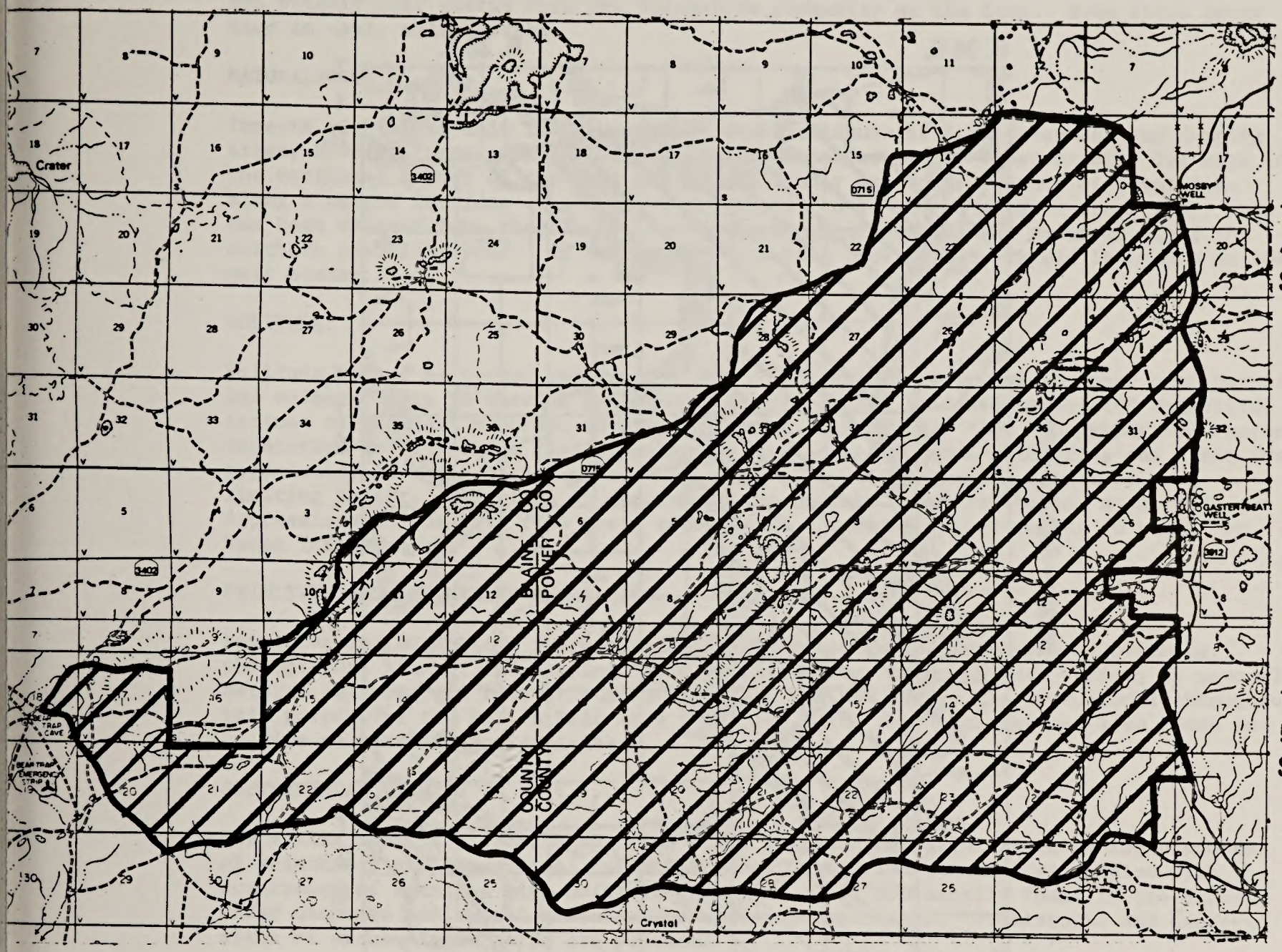
No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness.

33–14
MOSBY BUTTE

R. 27 E. R. 28 E. R. 29 E.

T. 4 S.

T. 5 S.



LEGEND

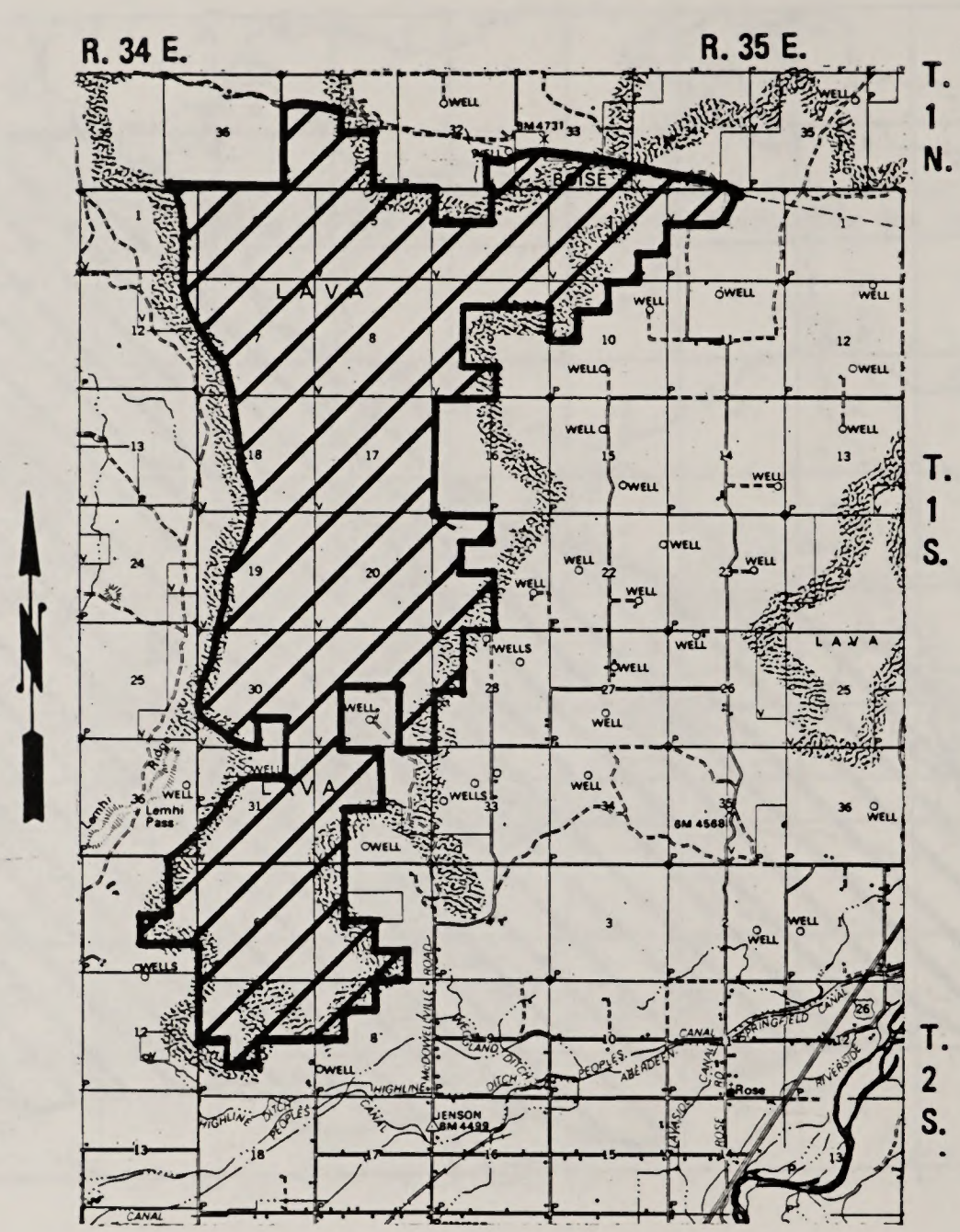
WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

33–16
MORGAN



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 9,420 acres of BLM land and is located five miles north of Blackfoot. Topographic relief across the unit is minimal with an elevational variation of 300 feet. It includes the southernmost extension of the 4,100 year old Hell's Half Acre lava flow. Almost the entire unit is lava with collapsed lava tubes, caves, fissures and other volcanic features in the unit. Vegetation is sparse due to low rainfall and limited soil development. Scattered junipers, forbs, grasses, and prickly pear cactus form the vegetative community on the lava. Some ferns occur deep in cool, moist cracks.

NATURALNESS:

Impacts within the unit include vehicle ways, evidence of lava trespass, and dumping sites, however, none of these impacts can be considered very substantial. Two ways in the northeast corner of the unit are apparent only due to an absence of vegetation along a narrow corridor on the flow, and appear to be access ways to areas where lava has been removed from the flow. Littering and minor dumping has occurred along the northern powerline road. An abandoned automobile lies in a collapsed lava tube on the unit border.

SOLITUDE:

Solitude cannot be termed outstanding due to the unit's narrow width, poor configuration and vulnerability to outside influences. Agricultural land and associated activities intrude to the unit's border on the east, west, and south. Flat topography and sparse vegetative cover provide little screening from adjacent human activities and limit the opportunity to avoid others within the unit. The unit's narrow width is also a limiting factor. A feeling of remoteness can only be found in the low areas and depressions in the lava flow where topographic screening is sufficient to block out human influences.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive and unconfined recreational opportunities include geologic sightseeing, photography, hiking, and camping. The concentration, frequency and variety of unusual natural features and recreational attractions are not considered exceptional throughout this portion of the Hell's Half Acre lava flow. The unit's narrowness also tends to confine recreation opportunities.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The entire unit is a recent lava flow which represents a significant geologic process of scientific and educational value. Pioneer vegetative communities coupled with the occurrence of ferns, a high moisture-demanding plant not usually found in the desert, offer uncommon ecological values of educational importance. Prehistoric and historic sites of archaeologic value are present.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that supported further study pointed out the unit's lava features and vegetative communities as having tremendous opportunity for public education and scientific study. Others believed the unit's small size, poor configuration, minimal topographic screening, and nearness to agricultural activities did not justify dropping the unit. Other comments stated that dropping areas because of minimal topographic and vegetative screening discriminates against the majority of desert wild lands. Others felt that the unit's narrow width and sounds around it were not reason enough to drop it from study. Primitive recreation opportunities were thought to exist for a variety of activities.

Other comments stated that the unit is not natural, does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation, and should not be a study area.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

The unit's supplemental values were recognized in the proposed decision.

Opportunities for solitude could be considered outstanding in the small unit if: screening was adequate; external activities were not imposing; and its configuration did not increase a visitor's chances of meeting others and encountering the views and sounds of adjacent farming activities.

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are not outstanding. Recreational attractions are not exceptional and the unit's small size and narrowness would tend to confine use between intensively used agricultural lands. The sense of being in a primitive setting is limited because of the nearness to active farming practices.

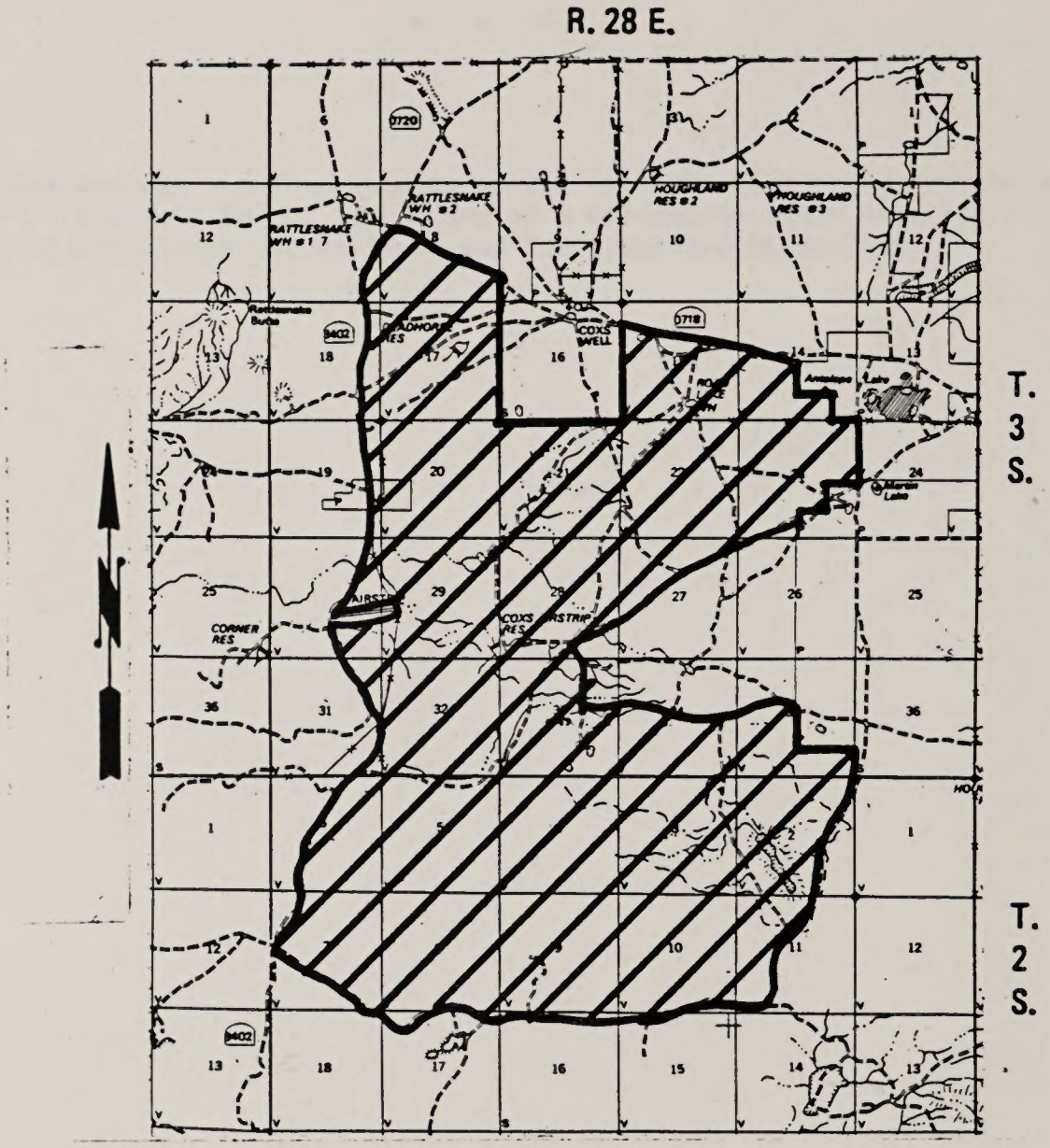
* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.



33–22
COX'S PLACE



33-22 COX'S PLACE

The April 1980 proposed decison included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 12,790 acres of BLM land and is located 15 miles southwest of Big Southern Butte. This flat unit varies only 300 feet in elevation, with the highest point 5,352 feet. Vegetation is sparse and low, consisting mostly of sagebrush and grasses.

NATURALNESS:

Vehicle ways constitute a significant impact on the area, as they completely cross the unit in four places. Five reservoirs are within the unit with ways leading to them. A fence crosses the north half, another runs through the western portion. Cox's airstrip is a significant outside impact due to its close proximity, and to the north Cox's Well and associated structures are visible. Major ways, off-road vehicle routes and livestock developments have affected much of the area. Topographic and vegetative screening is insufficient to hide these imprints from casual observation. The unit does not appear to have been affected primarily by natural processes.

SOLITUDE:

There is almost no topographic or vegetative screening and the area is not large enough to isolate visitors from outside influences and from each other. The unit's small size and lack of vegetative and topographic screening do not afford opportunities that are outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive and unconfined recreational opportunities include camping, hiking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. The unit's small size and lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreational attractions render the recreation opportunities less than outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Portions of the unit are critical antelope range and sage grouse booming and brood rearing grounds. Possibilities for archaeological sites are high, due to known sites near the border.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that supported further study disagreed that the unit lacked naturalness, stating more consideration should be given to the prospect of allowing time for nature to heal minimal impacts. Others pointed out that litter should not be regarded as a problem beyond solution. Also mentioned were outstanding opportunities for solitude-recreation and that these values should outweigh the minimal impacts on naturalness. Some comments stated that the proposed decision indicated the unit has outstanding opportunities for spelunking and that solitude can be easily obtained. Other comments stated that the unit was not natural, does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation, and should not be studied further.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

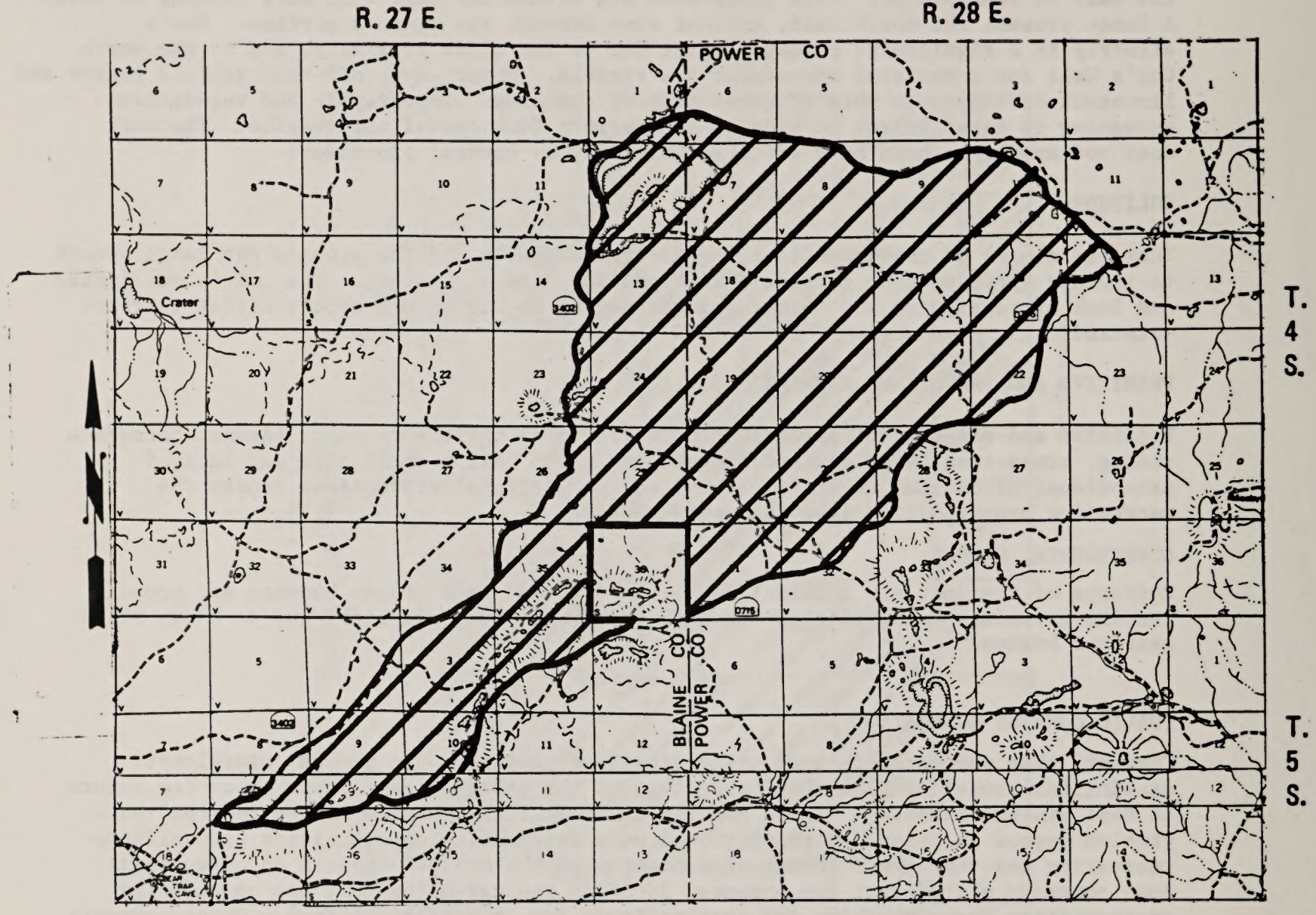
The unit does not meet the naturalness criteria. Human imprints, particularly the vehicle ways and livestock developments, are very apparent throughout the entire unit. Comments suggested that the unit be evaluated based on the prospect of allowing time for nature to heal the human imprints. This could only take place if the unit as a whole met the naturalness criteria; small areas could be considered for rehabilitation through natural processes or hand labor. The proposed decision did not indicate that outstanding opportunities for spelunking exist or that solitude could easily be obtained.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, and a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

33–23
BEAR TRAP



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 13,860 acres of BLM land with a 640-acre State inholding. It is located approximately 25 miles west of American Falls Reservoir and five miles north of the Crystal Ice Caves. The unit's topography is characterized by low hills with flat basins; elevation varies only 300 feet across the unit. Older volcanic features, which are well vegetated, interrupt the landscape. A collapsed lava tube beginning at Bear Trap Cave extends five miles northeast into the south portion of the unit. One low butte occurs in the northwest corner where several small caves can be found. A series of parallel cracks in the earth's surface extend through the unit's central portion and delineates the path of the Great Rift, an important geologic feature. Vegetation in the unit is principally sagebrush-grass. Several ephemeral ponds are found along the unit's west side.

NATURALNESS:

The major impact affecting naturalness in the unit is the existence of many vehicle ways, with ten miles of substantial ways completely bisecting the unit in three places, while an additional eight miles penetrate the unit. Off-road vehicle trails are located in many sections of the unit. Topographic and vegetative screening is insufficient to hide these imprints from casual observation. The unit does not appear to have been affected primarily by natural processes.

SOLITUDE:

Desert shrubs and grasses dominate the unit and offer little vegetative screening. Some topographic screening is present where rock outcropping and grottos occur, but is considered minimal throughout the unit. Although it may be possible to find opportunities for solitude in small areas within the unit, the small size, irregular configuration (particularly the southwestern portion) and minimal topographic and vegetative screening do not afford opportunities that are outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities include hunting, hiking, geologic sightseeing, photography, spelunking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. The unit contains several exceptional and unusual natural features and recreational attractions. They include volcanic features such as low buttes, collapsed lava tubes, fissures in the earth's surface and caves. Physical and mental challenge is considered significant with the recreational activities. Recreational opportunities are considered outstanding within the unit.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Proximity to Bear Trap Cave, a well-known archaeological site possessing considerable surface lithic scatters, suggests that this unit may contain important sites and information regarding early inhabitants - the Shoshone and Bannock tribes. The unit has also been identified as critical antelope range as well as a sage grouse booming ground and brood-rearing area. The cracks of the Great Rift, which occur in the northwest to southeast portion of the unit, are of noteworthy geological interest.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that supported further study disagreed that the unit lacked naturalness, stating more consideration should be given to the prospect of allowing time for nature to heal minimal impacts. Others pointed out that litter should not be regarded as a problem beyond solution. Also mentioned were outstanding opportunities for solitude-recreation and that these values should outweigh the minimal impacts on naturalness. Some comments stated that the proposed decision indicated that solitude could easily be obtained in the unit.

Other comments stated that the unit was not natural, does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation, and should not be studied further.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

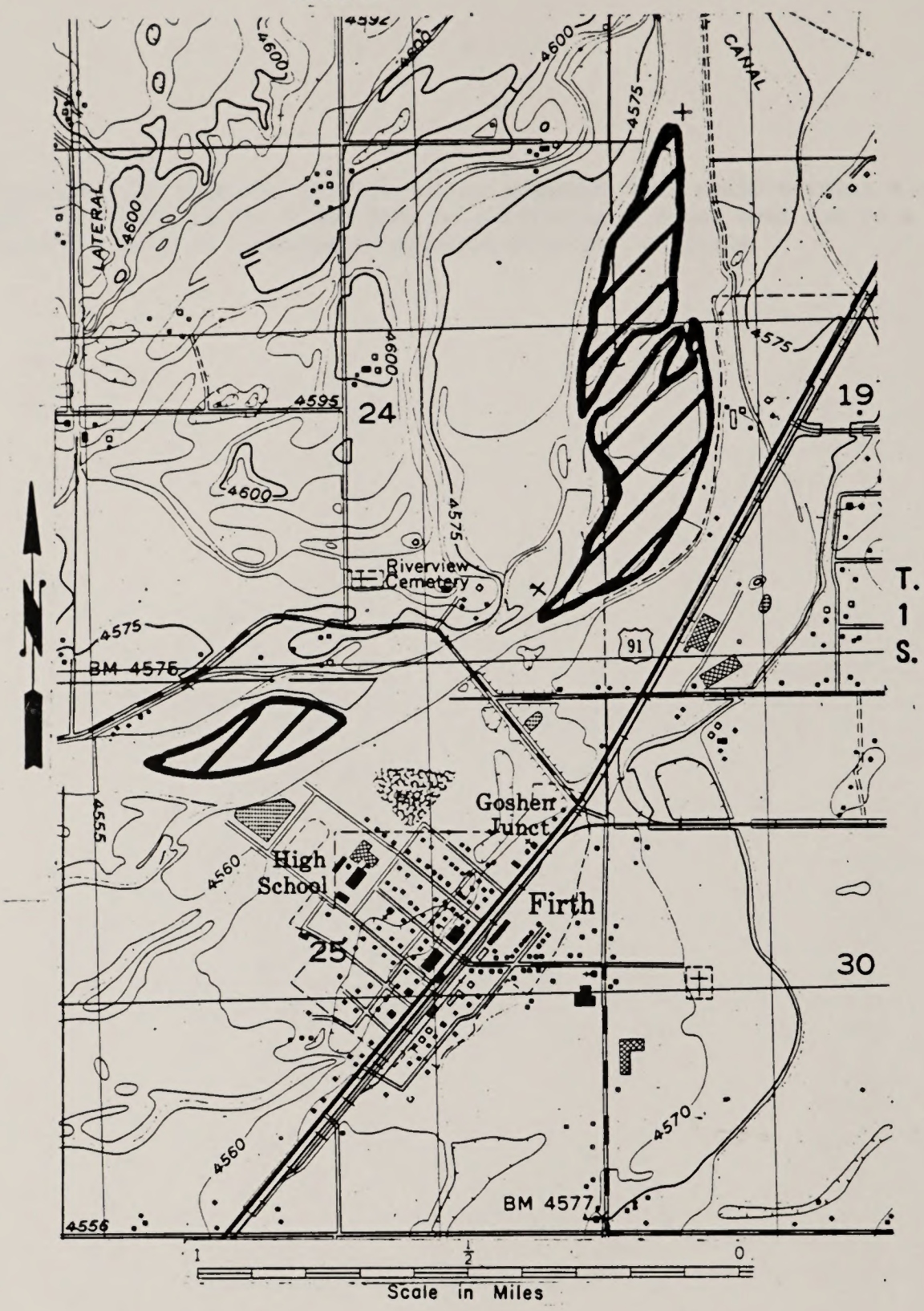
The unit does not meet the naturalness criteria. Human imprints, particularly the vehicle ways, are very apparent throughout the unit. Comments suggested that the unit be evaluated based on the prospect of allowing time for nature to heal the human imprints. This could only take place if the unit as a whole met the naturalness criteria; small areas could be considered for rehabilitation through natural processes or hand labor. The proposed decision indicated that outstanding solitude did not exist within the unit.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, and a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude.

33–24
FIRTH QUAD ISLANDS



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

33-24 FIRTH QUAD ISLANDS

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit consists of three islands totalling 86 acres of BLM land. The islands are located in a 1.8 mile stretch of the main stem of the Snake River, within 1/4 mile of the communities of Firth and Basalt. The islands are generally flat. They are well vegetated with cottonwood, willow, sage, and grasses; vegetation is dense around the perimeters. The surrounding river is shallow and relatively slow moving.

NATURALNESS:

The natural character of these islands is impacted by the proximity of human activity. The channel to island 2 is so shallow that the neighboring landowner frequently drives across; vehicle ways are apparent on the island. Litter is scattered over all the islands, some of it carried there by the Teton Dam flood, the remainder by local recreationists. Vehicles are plainly visible from the islands, and traffic from U. S. 26/91 is easily heard and fairly constant. Houses are located directly across the narrow channels from the islands, as are agricultural areas and accompanying farm machinery.

Fluctuations of the water level are not usually caused by natural forces, with water diversion structures lining the river, substantially decreasing flow during the irrigation season.

MANAGEABILITY:

Due to the shallow narrow channels, prevention of vehicle crossings from the shore to the islands would be very difficult. They are small and are surrounded by agricultural and residential areas. Managing these islands in an unimpaired state would be virtually impossible due to their size, location, variability of river flow, and channel separation from the mainland.

SOLITUDE:

Vegetative screening is considered good on all three islands. Topographic screening is minimal. External influences are considered substantial and so imposing that they cannot be avoided. Due to the islands small size, general lack of screening and imposing outside influences, opportunities for solitude are not considered outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive and unconfined recreational opportunities include fishing, hunting, and camping. Thick brush and a few openings inhibit camping opportunities. The unnatural water level fluctuations and low water quality reduce fishing opportunities and wildlife populations are not particularly abundant. Primitive recreation is considered less than outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

These islands provide habitat for beaver, rabbits, deer and some waterfowl.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

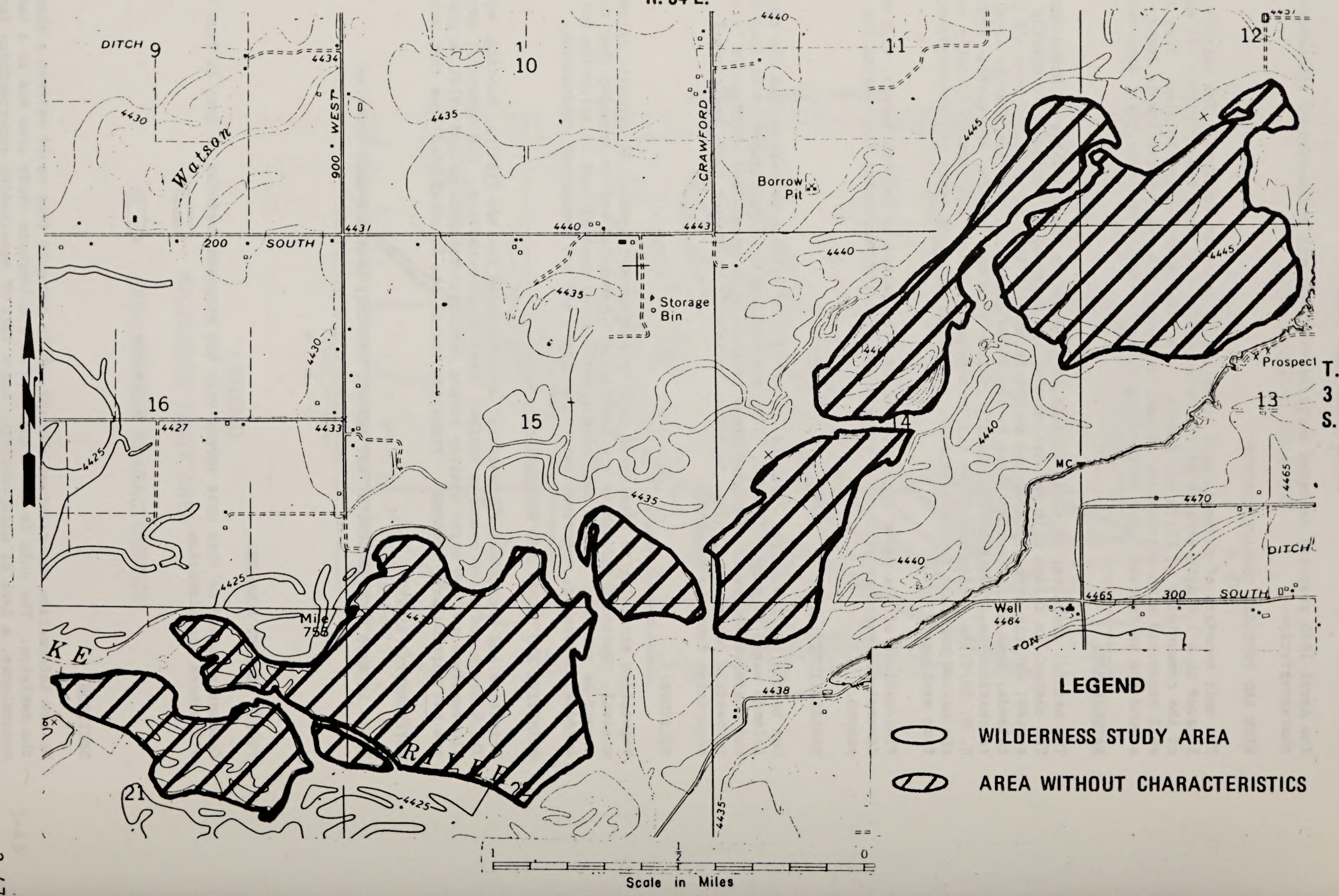
Comment received on this unit agreed with the proposed decision to drop it from further wilderness consideration.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, a lack of manageability, and a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

33–25
MORELAND QUAD ISLANDS



33-25 MORELAND QUAD ISLANDS

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit consists of seven islands totalling 807 acres of BLM land. They are located along a 4.7 mile stretch of the main stem of the Snake River downstream from Blackfoot, and four miles south of Moreland. The islands are generally flat. They are well vegetated with cottonwood, willow, sage, and grasses; vegetation is dense around the perimeters. The surrounding river is shallow, meandering and slow moving.

NATURALNESS:

Impacts on the islands include bulldozer tracks, motorcycle and other vehicle tracks, livestock fences, junk autos and litter. Bulldozer tracks and severe vegetation damage cut into the western end of island 8. Island 6 has been extensively used by motorcycles and has well worn trails on it. Fences were found on island 8 and several junk autos on islands 9 and 10. Trash and litter were found on all of the islands. External influences of a nearby highway and agricultural lands are considered substantial. None of the islands are large enough nor do they provide enough screening to hide these imprints from casual observation. The unit does not appear to have been affected primarily by natural processes.

MANAGEABILITY:

Islands 4, 6, 8, 9, and 10 are not actually islands during the irrigation season and drier months of the year, when the river channels dry up. Channels separating the other islands from the mainland are extremely shallow during low water seasons. Due to their small size, variability of river flow and channel separation from the mainland, it is not considered practicable to manage the islands in an unimpaired condition.

SOLITUDE:

Vegetative screening is considered good on all islands. Topographic screening is minimal. External influences are considered substantial and so imposing that they cannot be ignored or avoided. Due to the island's small size, general lack of screening and imposing outside influences, opportunities for solitude are not considered outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive and unconfined recreational opportunities include fishing, hunting, and camping. Thick brush and few openings inhibit camping opportunities. The unnatural water level fluctuations and low water quality reduce fishing opportunities and wildlife populations are not particularly abundant. Primitive recreation opportunities are considered less than outstanding.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comment received on this unit agreed with the proposed decision to drop it from further wilderness consideration.

* * *

DECISION:

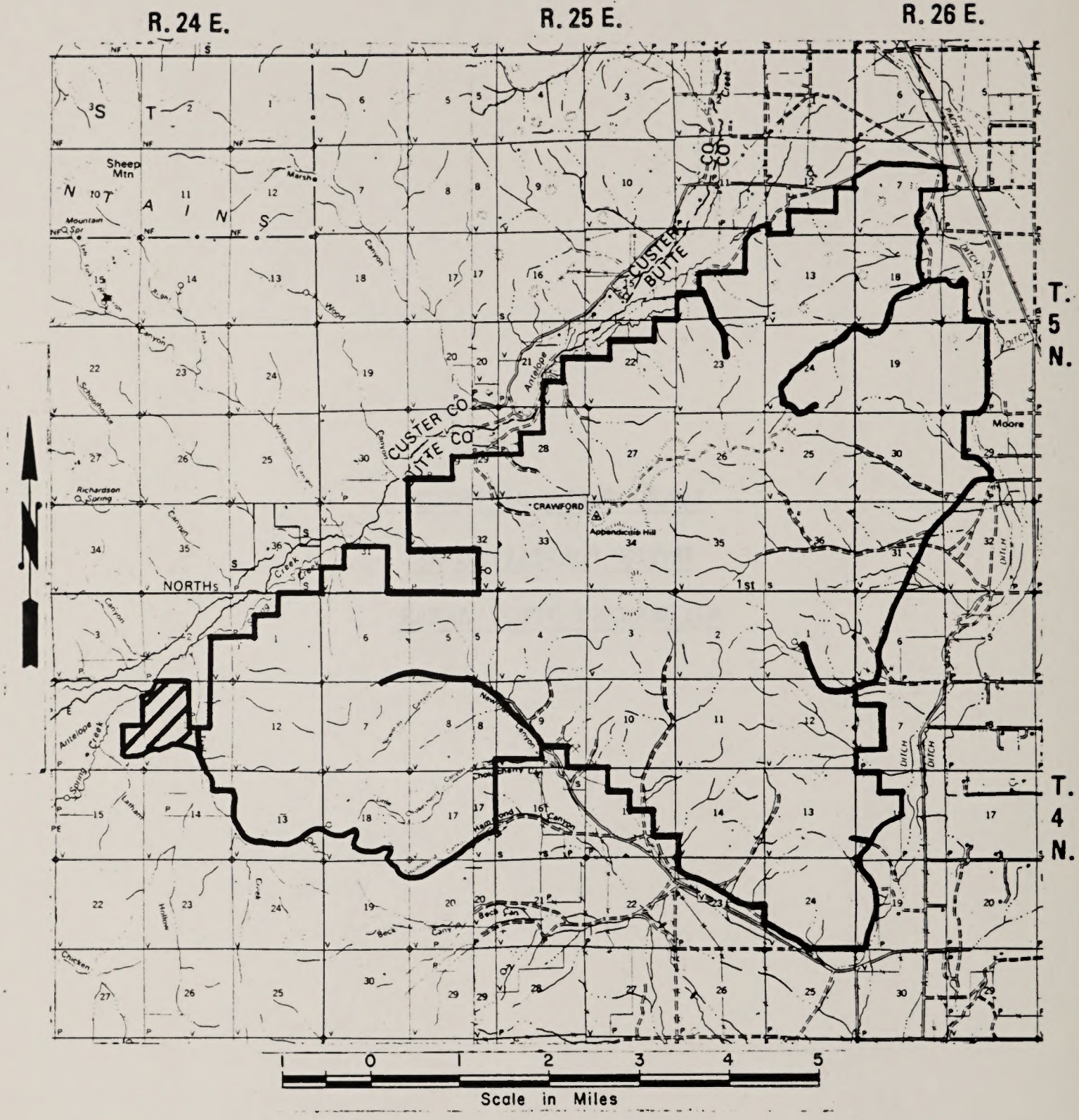
No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, a lack of manageability, and a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

IDAHO FALLS DISTRICT

UNITS IDENTIFIED AS

WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

31–14
APPENDICITIS HILL



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

31-14 APPENDICITIS HILL

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 25,500 acres of BLM land with a 640-acre State inholding. The unit has a semi-triangular form and is located two miles south of Darlington, two miles east of Grouse and five miles northwest of Arco.

Lying between the Antelope Creek and Big Lost River drainages, the unit contains several intermittent streams which contribute to both major drainages. The unit is mountainous, with Crawford Peak rising to 8,523 feet, 2,900 feet above Antelope Valley. Lower elevation hills are generally rounded, supporting sagebrush and grass. Several canyons contain impressive rock outcrops and caves. High northfacing slopes support concentrated stands of Douglas fir; choke-cherry and mountain mahogany can be found on slopes and canyon walls. Stands of aspen accompanied by willows grow in Newman and Chokecherry Canyons.

NATURALNESS:

In the unit's northeast corner, rocks have been dumped in piles just inside the unit. The unit boundary has been adjusted to exclude these impacts. Four small mining scars are evident just inside the unit near Newman Canyon. They appear insignificant and revegetation has made them less noticeable. A larger rectangular mining scar forms a ditch but is not a major intrusion. Two borrow pits occur near the borders. Their visual impact is minimal as they are partially revegetated and their aspect faces out of the unit. Eight livestock watering sites consisting of spring developments with troughs or tanks are spaced throughout the unit. While exposed soil is noticeable at these spots, erosion seems to be minimal and usually localized. Approximately 18 miles of vehicle ways penetrate the unit. Many are related to livestock maintenance, while others provide access for hunters. The longest vehicle access enters the unit from the northeast tip, and eventually winds up to Crawford Rock on Appendicitis Hill. A small reservoir appears as a grassy depression and is not a significant imprint. Human imprints, distributed mainly around the periphery, are judged to be substantially unnoticeable. The unit's large size and good topographic and vegetative screening tend to decrease the effect of most impacts on apparent naturalness. The unit as a whole appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature.

SOLITUDE:

The deep, narrow, meandering canyon systems and rugged mountainous region provide excellent topographic screening. At the Crawford Peak summit and on the ridge tops topographic screening is moderate. Vegetative screening is good on hillsides and in the canyons where tree species occur and moderate on ridges and slopes that support desert shrub species. Topographic and vegetative screening is poor in the far western corner of the unit where the boundary narrows to approximately 1/4 mile. Opportunities for solitude are considered less than outstanding within this small finger of land totalling 300 acres. The large size and good configuration combined with generally good topographic and vegetative screening afford outstanding opportunities for solitude.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreation opportunities include hiking, backpacking, hunting, wildlife observation, scenic photography, climbing, and sightseeing for botanical and geological features. The unusual or exceptional natural features and diversity of recreational attractions provide opportunities for primitive recreation which are considered outstanding. These features and attractions are lacking in the 300 acre parcel at the far western corner of the unit, with opportunities considered less than outstanding in this small parcel. There appears to be significant physical challenge associated with cross-country travel in the area due to the rugged terrain.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

A large part of this unit has been identified as critical deer range and a smaller portion as critical range for elk. The unit has heavy concentrations of chukar partridges and raptors as well as booming grounds and a brood-rearing area for sage grouse. Numerous archaeological sites occur in the unit, including pictographs and surface lithic scatters.

REHABILITATION:

The borrow pits and mining scars are in the process of natural revegetation and will be substantially unnoticeable in a few years. The vehicle ways would also revegetate with time, with the exclusion of vehicles. The amount of trash that has been dumped in the unit is small and easily removable.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that supported further wilderness study felt the vehicle ways and other human imprints were not that noticeable and would revegetate easily. They believed the unit offers outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation because of its large size and physical characteristics. The unit's wildlife habitat and archaeological sites were pointed out as important supplemental values.

Other comments did not favor further study, stating the unit does not appear natural because of vehicle ways, livestock developments, and mining scars. They also stressed that views of nearby towns and agricultural developments and the lack of significant water sources decreases opportunities for primitive recreation and solitude. Comments stated that the vehicle route to the top of the two highest peaks in the unit should be a road since there are intermittent bulldozer cuts along the entire length. Others stated that the way into Newman Canyon was constructed and is maintained for livestock management uses.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Reevaluation shows that the human imprints are not that noticeable. They are scattered throughout this large unit and are hidden by the good topographic and vegetative screening.

A portion of the vehicle route leading to the top of the two highest peaks was originally identified as a road. The remaining portion does show signs of past construction but does not appear to be maintained for regular and continuous use. The Newman Canyon way does appear to meet the road definition up to the livestock watering area. Adjustments have been made to exclude this road.

The reference in the proposed decision to rehabilitation was to portions of the unit that meet the naturalness definition, not to portions that do not.

* * *

DECISION:

Based on public comment and field evaluations, the route up Newman Canyon is now classed as a road. A unit of 24,870 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

31-17 WHITE KNOB MOUNTAINS

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 9,950 acres of BLM land. This figure differs from the 9,900 acres shown in the August 1979 report due to more accurate calculation of acreage. The unit is located less than one mile north of Grouse, a community in Antelope Valley. On the north a road penetrates approximately 2 1/2 miles into the core of the unit. The unit is mountainous, with its highest point rising 2,000 ft. above Antelope Valley to an elevation of 7,955 ft. Many well defined drainages with southward orientations feed Cherry and Antelope Creeks, just outside the unit. While the majority of the unit supports a sagebrush-bunchgrass complex, scattered and concentrated stands of Douglas fir occur at higher elevations. Mountain mahogany is often found between the sage-to-Douglas fir transition or on the tops and slopes of lower hills with cooler aspects. Several pockets of aspen and willow surround moist spring areas in upper Waddoups Canyon.

NATURALNESS:

Livestock grazing has little impact on the unit's apparent naturalness. Cattle trails and salting areas generally are not obvious. Near springs, pipes have been sunk to feed small troughs. Trampling in the area immediately surrounding each tank is evident though good vegetative and topographic screening tends to mitigate the impact. The remains of a relatively small reservoir are situated at the end of the way in Ras Canyon. Vegetation has come back on the dam making it quite unnoticeable. Six vehicle ways penetrate the unit at various locations. These ways appear to receive infrequent use and their impact is not substantial. External influences are not considered substantial and do not affect apparent naturalness. Topographic and vegetative screening is sufficient to hide these minor imprints from casual observation. The unit appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature.

SOLITUDE:

Vegetative screening is considered excellent at higher elevations and fair near the unit's southern border. The deeply cut drainages and generally mountainous topography offer good to excellent topographic screening. The unit contains adequate topographic and vegetative screening affording outstanding opportunities for solitude.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The unit offers a variety of primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities including hunting, camping, hiking, photography, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing. The unit is presently used for deer and sage grouse hunting. A year-round water source and aspen groves offer good camping sites. The recreational opportunities are considered outstanding because of the unusual natural features and recreational attractions associated with the unit's canyons. There is significant challenge, both mental and physical, associated with some of the recreation activities.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The abundance of deer, antelope and sage grouse suggests that this area contains important habitat. The unit has been identified as having numerous archaeological sites including hunting blinds, rock shelters and surface lithic scatters, which offer archaeological and educational values.

REHABILITATION:

A small trash pile could easily be removed using hand labor. Water troughs and ways would then constitute the only noticeable human imprints remaining in the unit. Restricting vehicular access would allow natural revegetation within a few years and the troughs could easily be removed.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that supported further study stated that the unit meets the minimum wilderness definition and has important supplemental values. Other comments did not favor further study, or questioned the statements on rehabilitation.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

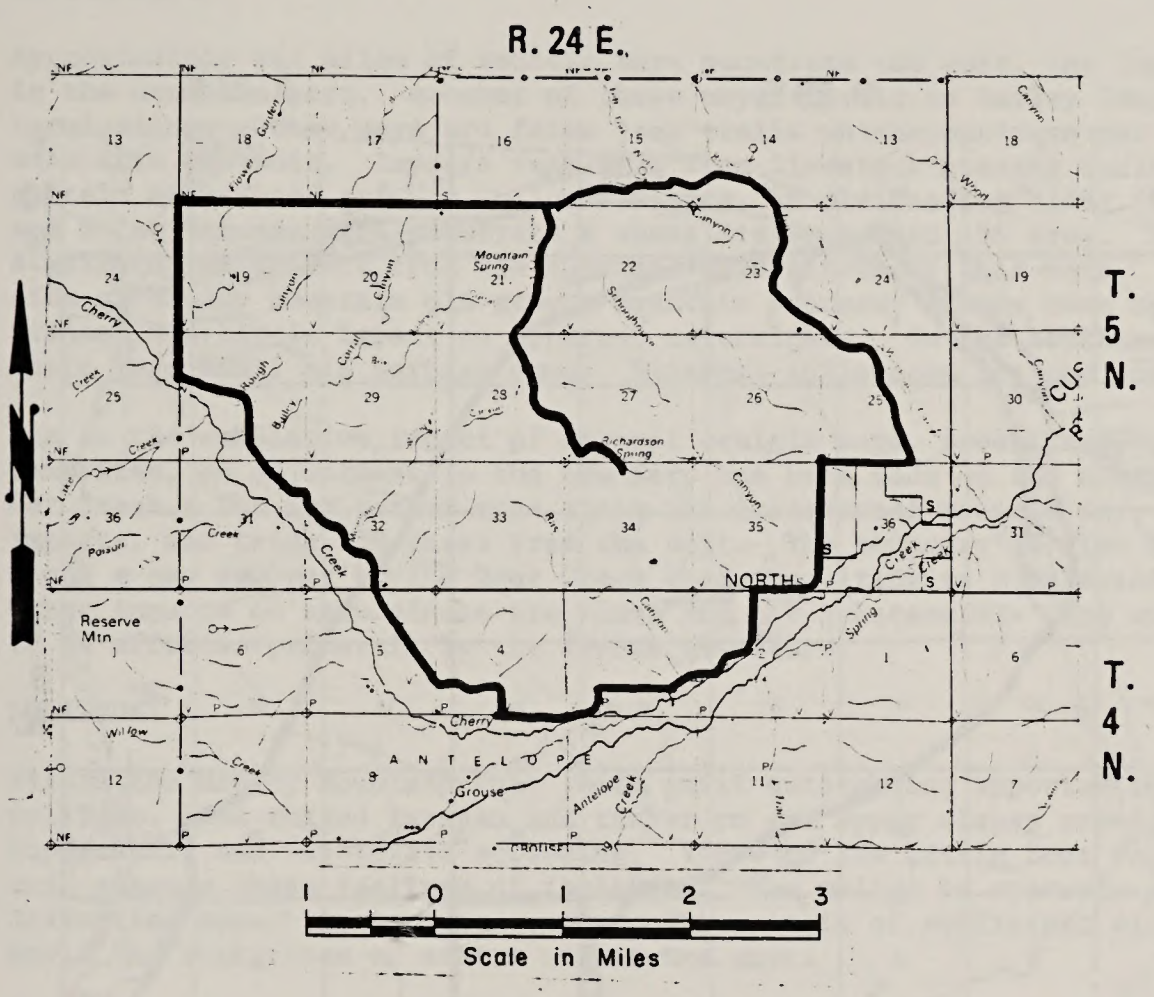
Most comments were not specific to the wilderness inventory criteria. The reference in the proposed decision to rehabilitation was to portions of the unit that already meet the naturalness criteria.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 9,950 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

31–17
WHITE KNOB MOUNTAINS

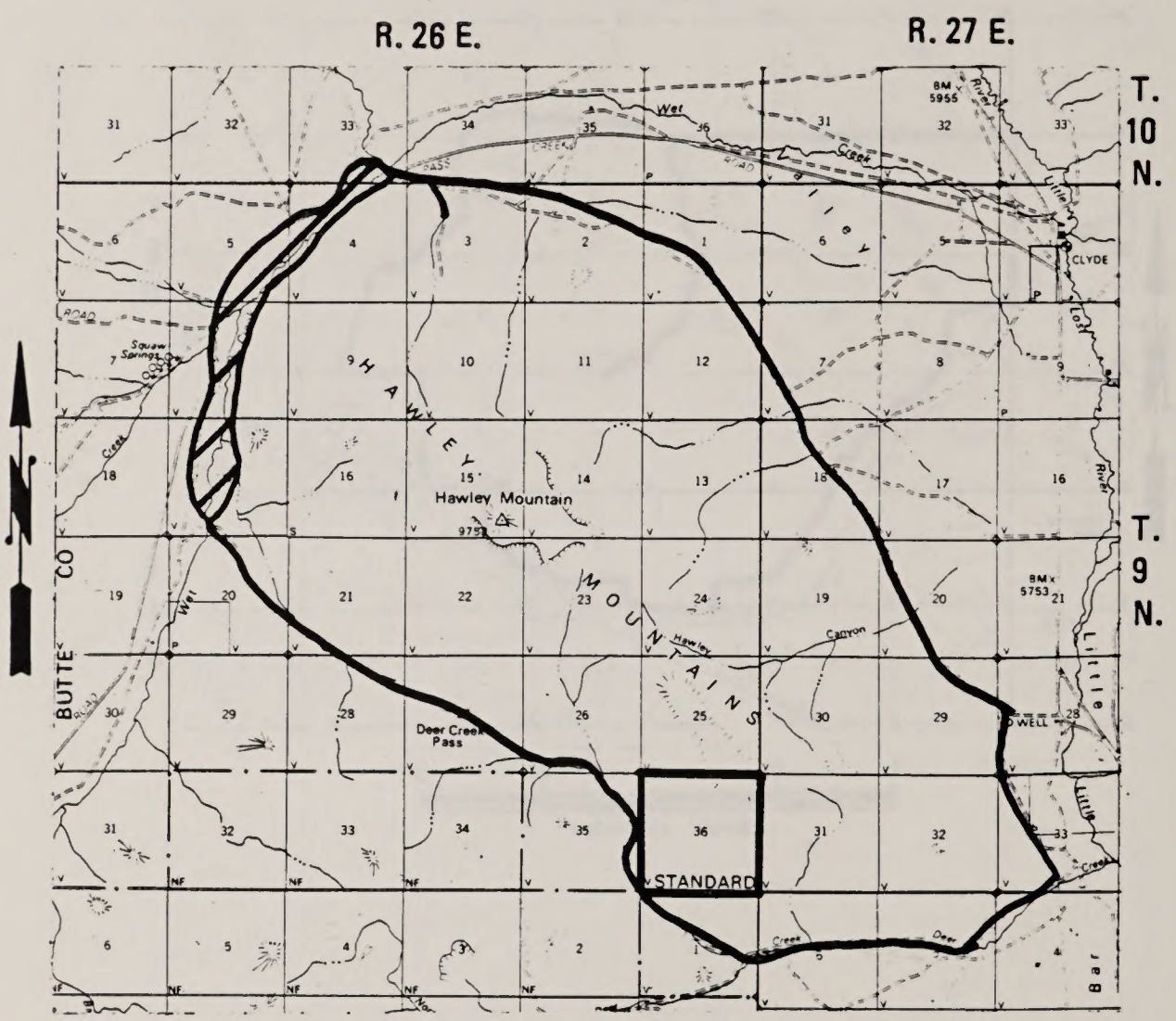


LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

32–3
HAWLEY MOUNTAIN



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

32-3 HAWLEY MOUNTAIN

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 16,150 acres of BLM land with two State section inholdings. It lies 2½ miles southwest of Clyde on the eastern edge of the Lost River Range. The unit completely encompasses Hawley Mountain. The base of the mountain begins at about 6,000 feet and rises sharply to 9,752 feet. Well-defined drainages fan out in all directions toward the unit boundary. Vegetation at lower elevations is dominated by a sagebrush/bunchgrass community. Large stands of older mountain mahogany and some Douglas fir blanket the higher elevations in about half the unit. Much of the summit and associated ridges are dominated by rock outcrops and talus slopes.

NATURALNESS:

Approximately six miles of vehicle ways penetrate the unit, the longest climbs a basin in the northern part. Another of these ways travels up Hawley Canyon 1¼ miles before terminating. Other ways are faint jeep trails which penetrate not more than a half mile into the unit. Impacts resulting from livestock grazing include scattered parcels of cropped grasses on lower slopes, an old seeding along the western border, and a few fences which penetrate a short distance into the area. None of these impacts significantly detract from the apparent naturalness of this unit. On the southwest side of Hawley Mountain old growth mountain mahogany stands have been thinned. This project has little impact on apparent naturalness. On the southeast side of the unit there is a small old garbage dump. External influences are not considered significant.

Due to the cumulative impact of several vehicle ways, powerlines, grazing and numerous campsites, an adjustment in the boundary has been made on the northwest side along Wet Creek. The new border runs along the easternmost vehicle way, excluding these impacts, and trims 630 acres from the unit. The boundary is also adjusted slightly along a new segment of the Deer Creek Road, resulting in a deletion of 10 acres. Other impacts on naturalness are minor and not substantial. The unit as a whole appears to be affected primarily by the forces of nature.

SOLITUDE:

Within the Hawley Mountain Unit there exist outstanding opportunities for experiencing solitude. The rugged terrain and timber on the upper slopes provide excellent topographic and vegetative screening. Views of the Little Lost Valley from within the unit enhance these feelings of isolation. The valley is sparsely populated and human activities appear to be very remote. The unit is of sufficient size for a visitor to avoid the activities of others within the unit.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Hunting is an outstanding recreational activity within this area. Deer, antelope, elk, and sage grouse all utilize this unit extensively. Hiking, horseback riding, rock climbing, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing are also outstanding recreational opportunities. The gentle lower slopes and the rugged, rocky upper slopes provide a wide diversity of environments for these recreational activities.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains important habitat for a variety of wildlife. Pronghorn antelope use the southwest portion of the unit as a migration route and the north and west portions as fawning grounds. The lower slopes have been identified as sage grouse nesting and brood-rearing areas along with mule deer winter range. Views to the west of the proposed Borah Peak wilderness provide striking vistas from Hawley Mountain's summit. This is also true of the view of the Lemhi Range and jagged Diamond Peak to the east. Within this unit two threatened plants have been identified: Invested cryptantha and Idaho Hymenopappus. This unit is also of archaeological importance; hunting blinds, surface lithic scatters and rock shelters are located throughout the area.

REHABILITATION:

With restrictions on vehicular access the ways within the unit should revegetate in two to five years. Seeding of the more impacted areas and the use of water bars to channel water off the ruts would speed this process. The small garbage dump could easily be removed using hand labor.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that supported further wilderness study agreed that the unit was natural in appearance, however, some comments felt the ways leading to Hawley Canyon should be excluded. Other comments indicated the ways were substantially unnoticeable and would easily revegetate. Supportive comments on solitude and primitive recreation indicated the unit offered outstanding opportunities. Comments stated the cultural modifications in the valley below had a minor affect on solitude, while others thought a visitor had a feeling of being removed when looking down at human development from afar. Supplemental values of geology, biology, archaeology, and threatened plants were mentioned.

Other comments concurred that 640 acres along Wet Creek should be excluded due to the cumulative impact of vehicle ways and powerlines.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

The ways in Hawley Canyon do not appear significant enough, either individually or cumulatively, to influence apparent naturalness. These ways would revegetate naturally in two to five years. The reference in the proposed decision to rehabilitation was to portions of the unit that meet the naturalness criteria, not to portions that do not.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 15,510 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

32-9 BLACK CANYON

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 5,400 acres of BLM land. This figure differs from the 5,220 acres shown in the August 1979 report. The initial inventory located the southern boundary along a legal subdivision. After reevaluation in the field it was determined that a more appropriate boundary would be a way near the subdivision line, resulting in an increase in 180 acres. The unit lies in the foothills of the Lemhi Range between the Birch Creek and Little Lost River Valleys. The rugged Lemhi Range rises from the southern unit boundary to a height of 7,455 feet in the northwest portion. Several deep canyons cut the area with steep rock walls and intermittent streams. Junipers outline the stratification of sedimentary rocks on the upper slopes. A few dense patches of Douglas fir occur on higher points in the unit. A sagebrush/bunchgrass community dominates the lower slopes and canyons.

NATURALNESS:

Two vehicle trails penetrate the unit from the south following canyon bottoms. A faint spur trail runs a short distance to Jackknife Cave on the west wall of the eastern canyon. A barbed wire fence is located in the northeast portion of the unit.

External influences are considered minimal, and include distant sights of agricultural lands and associated structures and the Department of Energy facilities to the east.

Even though the unit is small, the natural features of the area are so prominent and of such high interest that the casual observer would tend to overlook the imprints of man in favor of examining the natural features. The area generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature.

SOLITUDE:

Extensive topographic variation combined with some vegetative screening make opportunities for solitude outstanding. The deep, winding canyons, caves, rock outcrops and scattered junipers offer outstanding opportunities for visitors to avoid others within the unit.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Opportunities for rock-climbing and spelunking are outstanding in this unit. The many rock outcrops, faces and cliffs provide excellent possibilities for climbing. Numerous caves are located in the area and these offer opportunities for exploring. Hiking up the canyons and viewing the variety of beautiful rock formations is also an outstanding opportunity. The unique geologic features found in this area combined with wildlife populations make this unit a good location for photography. Overall the quality of recreational opportunities is considered outstanding because of the exceptional or unusual natural features and recreational attractions throughout the unit.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Rock formations in this unit have important geologic, scenic, and educational values.

The unit is also important habitat for the prairie falcon, golden eagle, kestrels, Cooper's hawk, goshawk, sharp-shinned hawk, great horned owl, and red-tailed hawk. In addition, this area is historic bighorn sheep range. The unit is of important archaeological value, containing numerous rock shelters, pictographs and surface lithic scatters. Locations in the unit show evidence of human use dating back 10,000 years.

REHABILITATION:

Vehicle trails and ways are considered light and should revegetate through natural processes.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that agreed with the proposed decision recognized that the unit has some jeep trails and that agricultural development can be seen from a few viewpoints in the unit.

However, they felt the trails would easily revegetate through natural processes and that the unit contains sufficient topographic and vegetative screening to hide external human imprints. Screening was also stressed as contributing to outstanding opportunities for solitude. Comments pointed out that the unit has exceptional natural features that provide an outstanding primitive recreation attraction. The unit's archaeological sites and wildlife habitat were identified as important supplemental values.

Other comments did not support further study, emphasizing that the unit does not appear natural because of vehicle trails and a livestock fence. They also stressed that the views of agricultural and other developments, the unit's small size, lack of water, and presence of rattlesnakes makes opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation less than outstanding.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

The unit appears natural, displays an unusual diversity of landforms, has outstanding opportunties for solitude and primitive recreation, and important supplemental values. Topography and vegetation screen a visitor well from external sounds and views. Water is not necessary for a primitive recreation experience; the absence of it offers a risk or challenge to the primitive recreationist. The same may apply to rattlesnakes, which to some are a part of the Western outdoor experience.

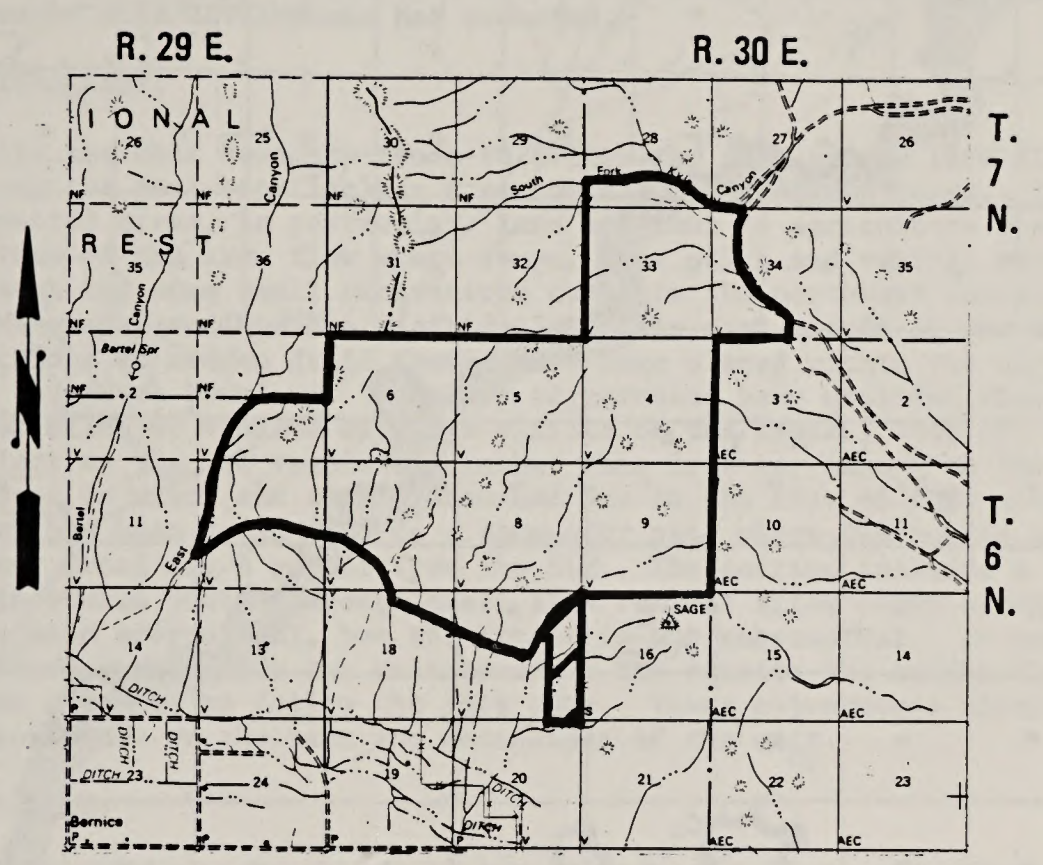
The reference in the proposed decision to rehabilitation was to portions of the unit that meet the naturalness criteria, not to portions that do not.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 5,400 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

32–9
BLACK CANYON



LEGEND

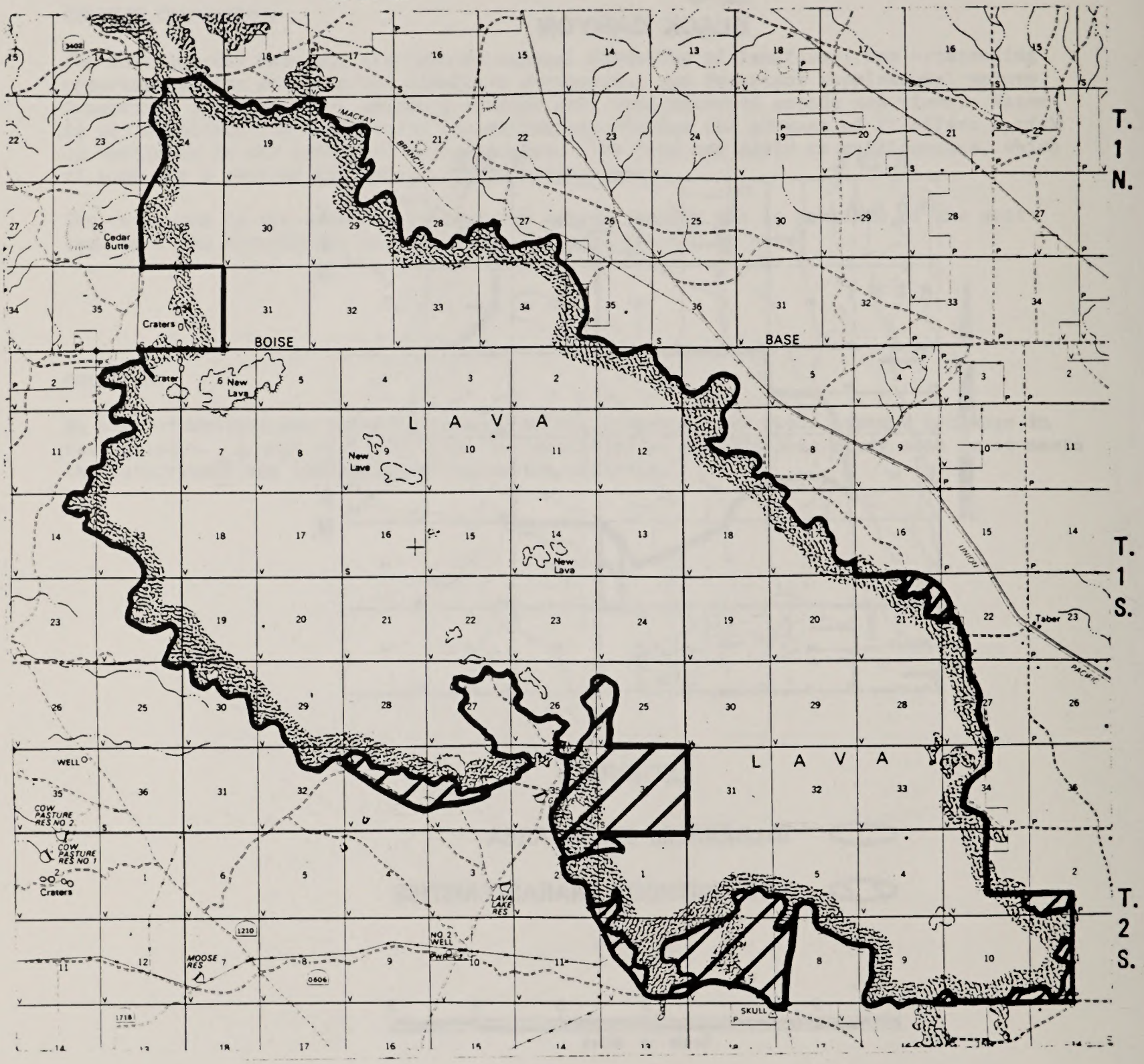
WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

33–4
CEDAR BUTTE



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

33-4 CEDAR BUTTE

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderenss characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 38,820 acres of BLM land with two State section inholdings. It is located just south of Atomic City with the northern tip of the unit lying five miles east of Big Southern Butte. The unit contains all but the northern tip of the Cerro Grande lava flow, which dates back to 10,780 $\pm$ 300 years old. Several more recent flows overlie the old flow. Volcanic features including blow-out craters, lava tubes and caves characterize the area. The source vent represents the highest point in the unit at 5,235 ft. Nowhere in the area does elevation drop below 4,600 ft. illustrating the unit's flat topography. The vegetation in the northern portion is characterized by bunch grasses, concentrated in the lava cracks where soil accumulation is greatest. Junipers and sage become more prevalent toward the central and southern portions where greater soil development has occurred.

NATURALNESS:

While the unit boundary tends to follow the edge of the lava flow, certain areas along the perimeter include a narrow margin of desert range. These are the most impacted areas, in particular, land adjacent to agriculture areas along the southeast corner of the lava flow where dumps, rock piles and vehicle ways exist. A livestock trough and some small excavations occur in the northwest corner. Numerous crested wheatgrass seedings are visible along this same margin on the unit's west side. Three sections of wooden drift fences have been placed within the unit along railroad tracks on the north boundary. Boundary adjustments have excluded these impacts. Approximately four miles of vehicle ways are visible on the lavas. They are apparent more from their affect on the low vegetation rather than from any impact on the substrata. Their overall impact is minor and easily absorbed due to the size of the unit. A portion of the lava flow has been designated as a community pit, where the public can collect lava rock after obtaining a permit from the BLM. The section includes a large portion of the main source vent. Several small lava removal sites occur along the road leading to the main source vent, but the impact is not substantial. As most of the impacts are located just inside the unit boundary but outside the actual flow, the border has been adjusted to follow the lava edge. These adjustments eliminate impacts to naturalness on the east and west sides of the unit.

SOLITUDE:

Desert shrubs, grasses and juniper dominate the unit and offer little vegetative screening. Topographic screening is considered moderate overall, due to the general open and flat character of this lava landscape. The numerous depressions and lava swells provide adequate screening for visitors to avoid others within the unit. Other than the occasional passing of a train on the northeast and agricultural activities to the east, external influences are non-existant. Due to the unit's large size and sufficient relief, opportunities for solitude are considered outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The rugged nature of the unit offers outstanding opportunities for various recreational activities in an uncommon environment. Collapsed lava tubes, fissures and craters provide excellent exploratory possibilities for hikers, photographers, and geologists. Camping on the lava flow constitutes another unusual yet rewarding recreational activity for the enthusiast willing to pack water. Similarly, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing could provide risk and challenge for the winter recreationist. Due to the unit's large size and exceptional or unusual natural features and recreational attractions, opportunities for primitive recreation are considered outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

In addition to its scenic quality, the scientific and geologic significance of this lava flow is the greatest supplemental value. This uncommon landform offers unique educational opportunities to a variety of disciplines including geology, botany, zoology and ecology. The flow also provides important habitat for rabbits, coyotes, reptiles, bobcats, and mule deer. Booming grounds for sage grouse have been identified in the flow.

REHABILITATION:

The community pit area has only minor and sparsely distributed evidence of lava rock collection. These man-caused signs would eventually disappear as the lichen cover returned and weathering processes took effect. Closing the vehicle ways leading to these sites would eliminate any further impacts.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that agreed that the unit qualified as a study area were not detailed as to the reasons why it qualified. Other comments did not favor further study, mentioning roads, a powerline, crested wheatgrass seedings, and a reservoir; and indicating that they adversely affect naturalness and opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation.

Other comments stated that nearby agricultural sounds have a negative influence on the unit's naturalness and were disruptive to solitude. Solitude was also cited as less than outstanding because the unit lacks vegetative and topographic screening.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

The developments listed above are quite a distance outside of the unit and are not significant enough to affect the unit's wilderness values. These factors are not imposing enough to disqualify this large area from further study. A unit this large does not need good screening to provide outstanding opportunities--space and limited topographic relief is sufficient.

The reference in the proposed decision to rehabilitation was to portions of the unit that meet the naturalness criteria, not to portions that do not.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 35,700 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

33-15 HELL'S HALF ACRE

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 68,920 acres of BLM land with four State land inholdings totalling 2,560 acres, and a 40-acre private inholding. The BLM acreage figure differs from the 66,200 acres shown in the August 1979 report due to a more accurate calculation of acreage. The unit is located five miles west of Idaho Falls. As a general rule, the edge of the lava flow forms the boundary on the north, east and west sides. Morgan's Pasture, a private agricultural area, with numerous developments, forms part of the unit's southern boundary. The unit consists almost entirely of a 4,100-year old "pahoehoe" lava flow. Very small amounts of desert land occur inside the boundaries. Various volcanic features including collapsed lava tubes, cones, caves, fissures and the source vent are found throughout the flow. Vegetation on the lava is typically a pioneer type including lichens, mosses and grasses; junipers and ferns appear in some of the cracks. The flow ranges from 4,600 to 5,350 feet in elevation.

NATURALNESS:

Boundary adjustments have been made to exclude agricultural trespass, several ways, and other impacts, decreasing the unit by 2,720 acres. The remainder of the unit is free from man-caused impacts due to difficult vehicular access onto the rugged lava. Fifteen ways enter the unit, but none are substantial nor extend over one mile. Along the powerline and road forming the southmost boundary and in some northern sections, garbage dumps are found just inside the border. Some disturbance and ways indicate a possibility of unauthorized lava removal. External influences consist of scattered dumps, views of agricultural activity, farm roads and highways and the cities of Idaho Falls and Shelley. These are visible from the edges of the unit and from the higher points within, but are not considered substantially imposing.

SOLITUDE:

Desert shrubs, grasses and juniper dominate the unit and offer little vegetative screening. Topographic screening is considered moderate overall, due to the general open and flat character of this lava landscape. The numerous depressions and lava swells provide adequate screening for visitors to avoid others within the unit. External influences are not considered significant. Due to the unit's large size and sufficient relief, opportunities for solitude are considered outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The unit offers outstanding opportunities for recreational activities. Volcanic forces have created lava tunnels which can be explored as well as a myriad of volcanic features that provide excellent subjects for photographers and geology buffs. Sightseeing is outstanding for botanical and zoological features. Snowshoeing and cross-country skiing could offer physical and mental challenge to winter explorers. For those willing to brave the rough portions of lava, hiking the area allows the visitor to discover its unique beauty. Camping constitutes another unusual and rewarding activity for the enthusiast willing to pack in water. Due to the unit's large size and exceptional or unusual natural features and recreational attractions, opportunities for primitive recreation are considered outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The scientific, educational, and scenic values of this unit are significant. A large portion of the unit has been designated a National Natural Landmark due to its unusual occurrence within the Snake River Plain. It includes excellent examples of "pahoehoe" lava features of geologic importance. The ecology of the lavas is unique, a prime illustration of pioneering plant communities. The ferns in the deep cracks are a botanical anomaly. Prehistoric and historic sites of archaeologic value are present.

REHABILITATION:

If protected from vehicle use, the ways entering the unit should revegetate with natural processes. Trash and garbage could be cleaned up using hand labor.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that supported further wilderness study gave the following reasons why the unit should be studied:

- The unit is natural in appearance. Human imprints that are present along the unit boundary are of minor significance; naturalness would be met if a boundary adjustment were made. The suggested adjustment was to exclude sections in the southeastern part of the unit containing bladed vehicle trails. The area is close to major population centers, yet so expansive and relatively untouched that human imprints are scarcely noticeable.

- Opportunities for solitude are outstanding. Visitors need only walk in 200 yds. to feel isolated. The little but sharp relief in the lava provides adequate screening for reducing encounters with others. Good camping sites are visually isolated from each other. Solitude would not be diminished if others were in the area. Size and topography allow for outstanding solitude.

- Opportunities for primitive recreation are outstanding. The unusual lava landscape provides opportunities for sightseers, geologists, photographers, hikers, etc. The area has real challenge for backpacking, low-skill rock climbing and desert survival. Recreation would be primitive because there are no roads, running water, or marked trails.

- Supplemental values are numerous and important. Those mentioned include: public education and scientific study of a large and recent lava flow, primitive vegetation, unique geological features, wildlife habitat, and one of a kind zoological and botanical sightseeing.

Other comments that did not favor further study gave the following specific reasons:

- The unit is not natural. The recommendation to drop 2,720 acres is supported because it does not meet the criteria. Surrounding sights and sounds detract from the unit's naturalness.

- Solitude is not outstanding. The unit's southern boundary consists of a road and powerline making a wilderness experience difficult because of sights and sounds of man associated with the road. Agricultural activities in the surrounding countryside are visible. Sights and sounds of tractors and other farm equipment penetrate and detract from the unit's solitude.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

The suggested boundary adjustment to exclude bladed trails in the southeastern part of the unit was further field checked. Access to these trails is blocked by agricultural activities. The trails are not maintained for continuous and regular use and do not appear to be frequently used. They are very difficult to locate and follow, and show only intermittent construction. In many places weathering has erased signs of earlier use. They can be found and followed from an aircraft but are not apparent from the ground. These trails do not have a significant influence on naturalness when considering the unit as a whole.

Sights and sounds surrounding the unit are not sufficient to disqualify the unit. Because of the unit's large size, excellent configuration and adequate topographic screening, the external views of human activity are not imposing. Once into the lava flow, a visitor need only travel a short distance to feel isolated. The many depressions, lava features and the area's vastness give a visitor unlimited opportunities to avoid external influences.

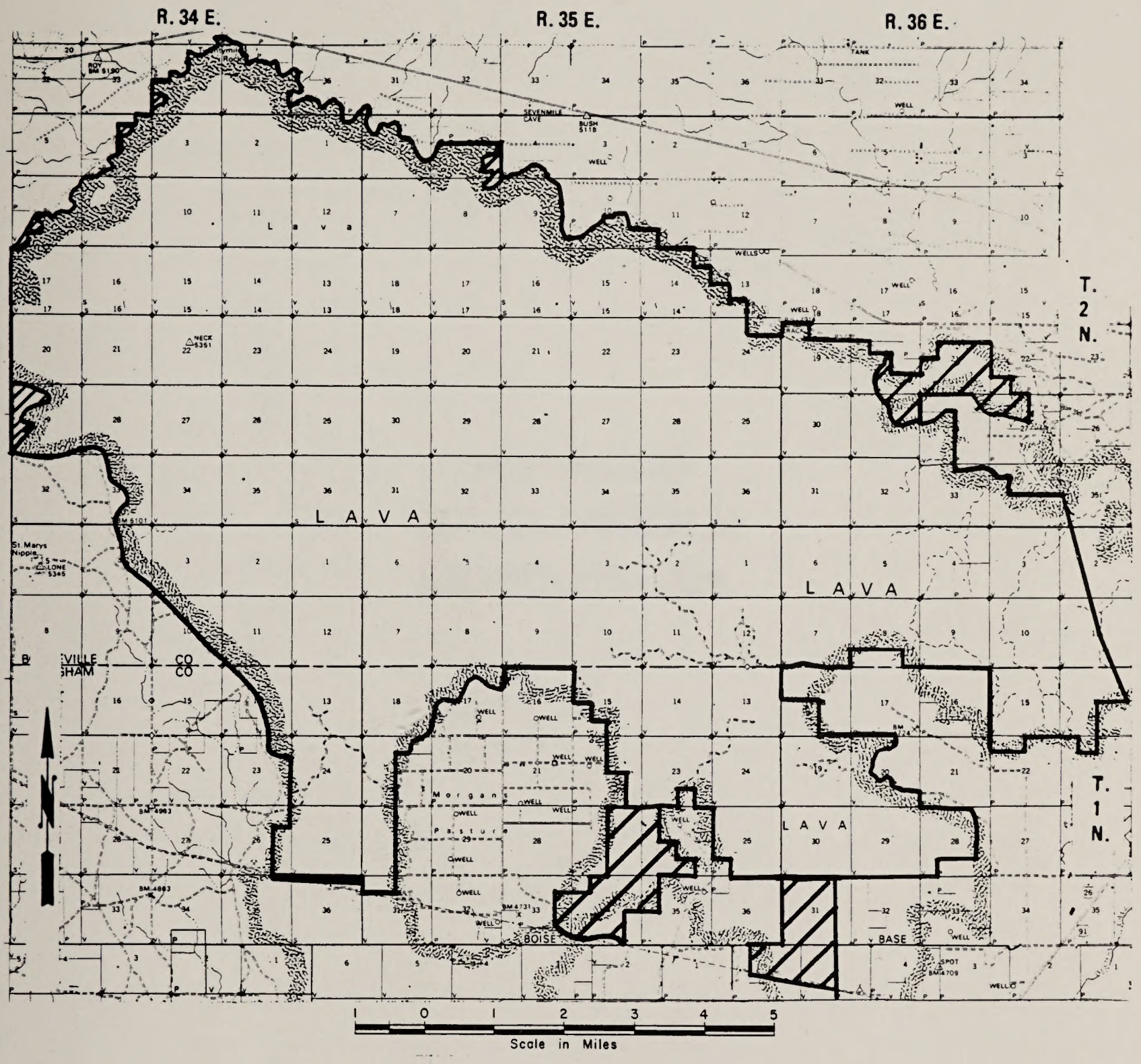
The reference in the proposed decision to rehabilitation was to portions of the unit that meet the naturalness criteria, not to portions that do not.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 66,200 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

33–15
HELL'S HALF ACRE



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

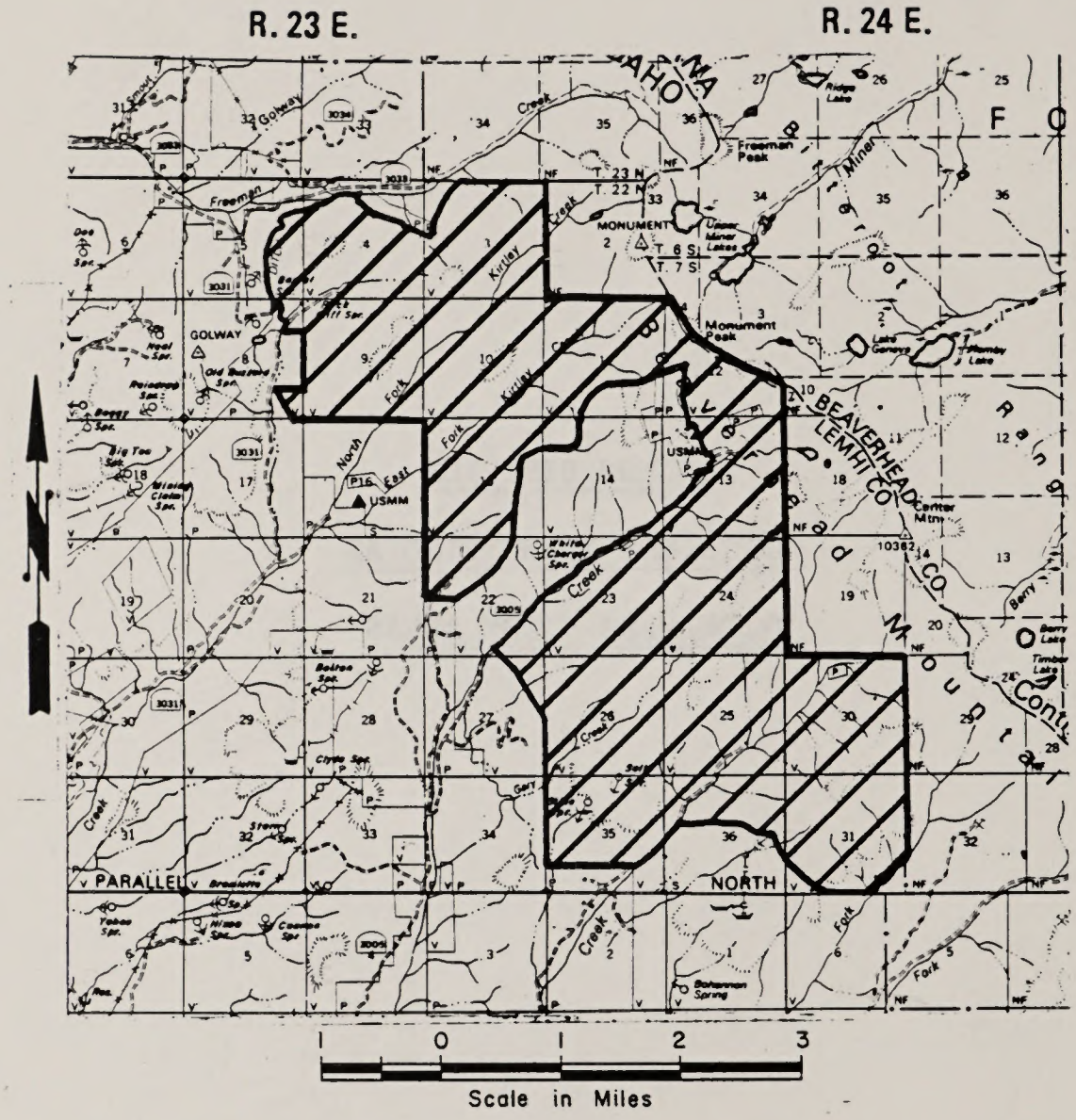
AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

SALMON DISTRICT

UNITS NOT IDENTIFIED AS

WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

41–3
GEERTSON CREEK



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA.

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

41-3 GEERTSON CREEK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 10,720 acres of BLM land with a 640-acre State land, and a 80-acre private land inholding. It is located northeast of Salmon. The unit has an irregular configuration due to land ownership patterns and designated roads. Boundaries include U. S. Forest Service lands to the north and east. The interior portion of the unit contains four major drainages with very steep relief. Elevation ranges from 5,800 feet in the foothills to 9,452 feet. The majority of landscape is covered by Douglas fir and sub-alpine timber species, with occasional outcroppings of sagebrush-grass species, and willow and aspen in the riparian zone. Some steep slopes are covered only by coarse talus.

NATURALNESS:

This unit has retained natural characteristics in spite of a few minor man-made intrusions. There are six spring developments scattered along the eastern edge of the unit. None of these low-impact intrusions are very far into the unit. Approximately five miles of ways extend for a short distance into the unit. The Geertson Creek Road and a road immediately to the north extend some distance into the unit causing a very irregular unit configuration.

SOLITUDE:

The vertical relief and variable terrain with deep canyons and numerous small drainages contribute to the ability of the area to afford opportunities for experiencing remoteness. Further enhancing these opportunities is the predominance of Douglas fir and sub-alpine species that would provide screening from others. However, the relatively small size and extremely irregular configuration of the unit render the opportunities less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The interesting topographical and vegetative features of this unit could provide a challenging primitive experience for a visitor. Opportunities exist for hiking, backpacking, spelunking, horseback riding, photography, and sightseeing for botanical, zoological, or geological features. However, the relatively small size and extremely irregular configuration render the opportunities less than outstanding.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that favored study area status indicated:

- Unit is adjacent to the proposed Big Hole Wilderness in Montana.
- Unit contains mountain goat habitat; proximity to wolf habitat.
- Good hunting area; scenic areas.
- Area has spectacular vistas, excellent opportunities for hunting, backpacking, nature observation, and other activities.
- Unit provides outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

Comments opposing study area status stated a lack of naturalness and lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Supplemental field checks were completed after receipt of public comment. The unit does adjoin the Big Hole RARE II area for a distance of one mile. The Idaho side of this border is a narrow corridor bordered on the west side by two roads and mining areas.

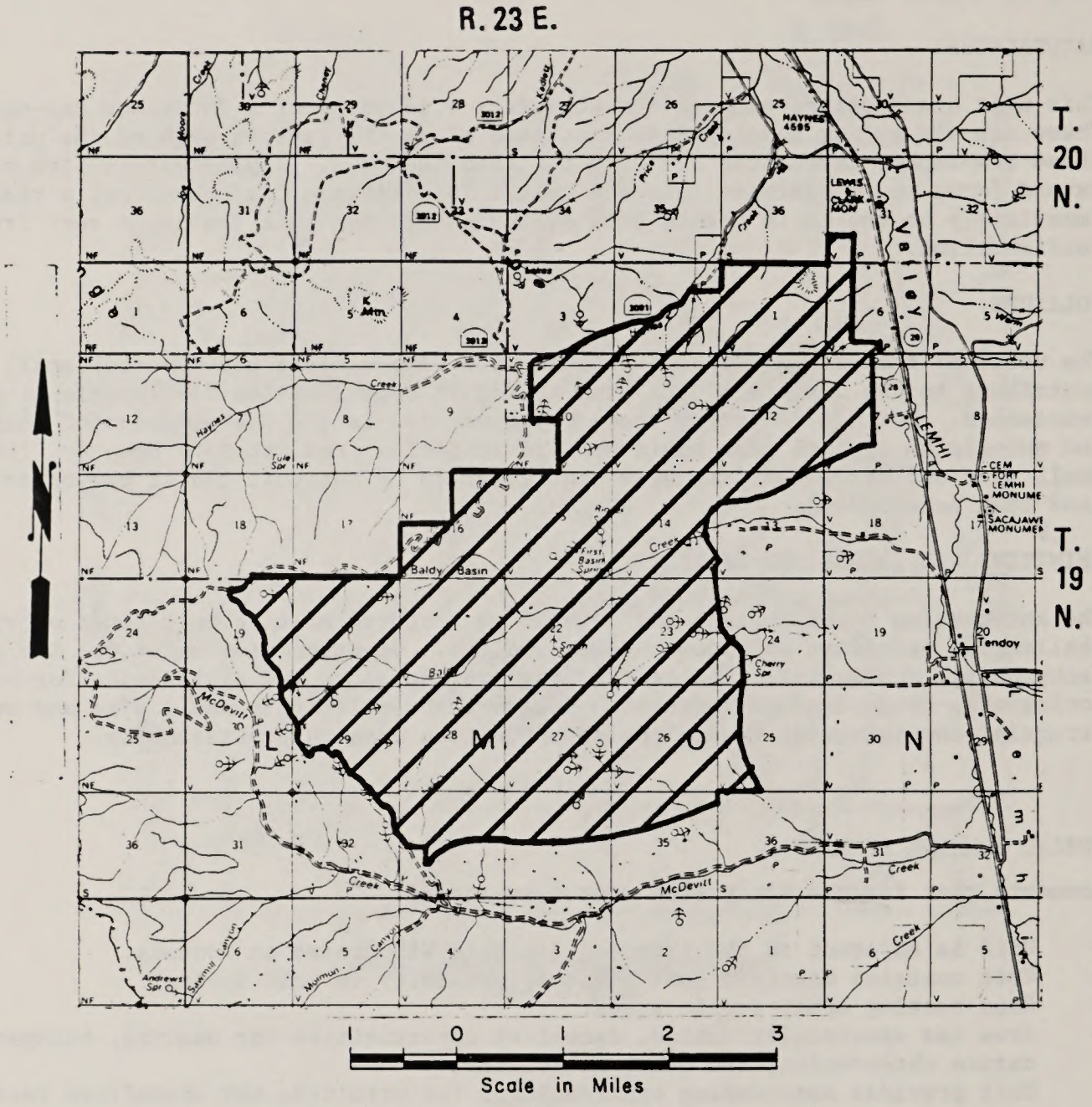
While the area is unquestionably scenic it is bordered and divided by constructed roads which severely constrain the ability to achieve outstanding solitude or primitive recreation.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

42–6
BALDY BASIN



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

42-6 BALDY BASIN

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 10,720 acres of BLM land and is located northwest of Tendoy. General boundaries are the Haynes and McDevitt Creek Roads, and private lands to the east. The unit's topography slopes eastward to the Lemhi River and is drained by Haynes Creek, Baldy Creek, and McDevitt Creek. Elevation varies from 4,800 to 8,250 feet. Vegetation is a mixture of sagebrush-grass and timber.

NATURALNESS:

The unit contains about 30 spring developments, three miles of buried pipeline and 20 miles of fencing. Access to the Larkspur Pipeline is by an obvious constructed road and access to other developments by lower grade jeep trails. Most of the developments are small and largely unnoticeable.

SOLITUDE:

The unit lacks an outstanding opportunity for solitude due to a lack of topographic relief, vegetative screening and sufficient size to avoid the sights and sounds of man due to surrounding roads and highly developed private ranches.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The narrow configuration of the unit, the bordering roads, developed private lands, and numerous fences in and around the unit severely restrict the opportunity for outstanding primitive and unconfined recreation.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments favoring study area status indicated that the area is predominantly in a natural state, and contains significant topographic variation. The comments expressed disagreement with the BLM evaluation that lack of vegetative screening and bordering roads and ranches should exclude the area as a study area.

Comments opposing study area status stated a lack of naturalness, and a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Whether for or against study area status, the comments merely agreed or disagreed with the findings, with no new information provided.

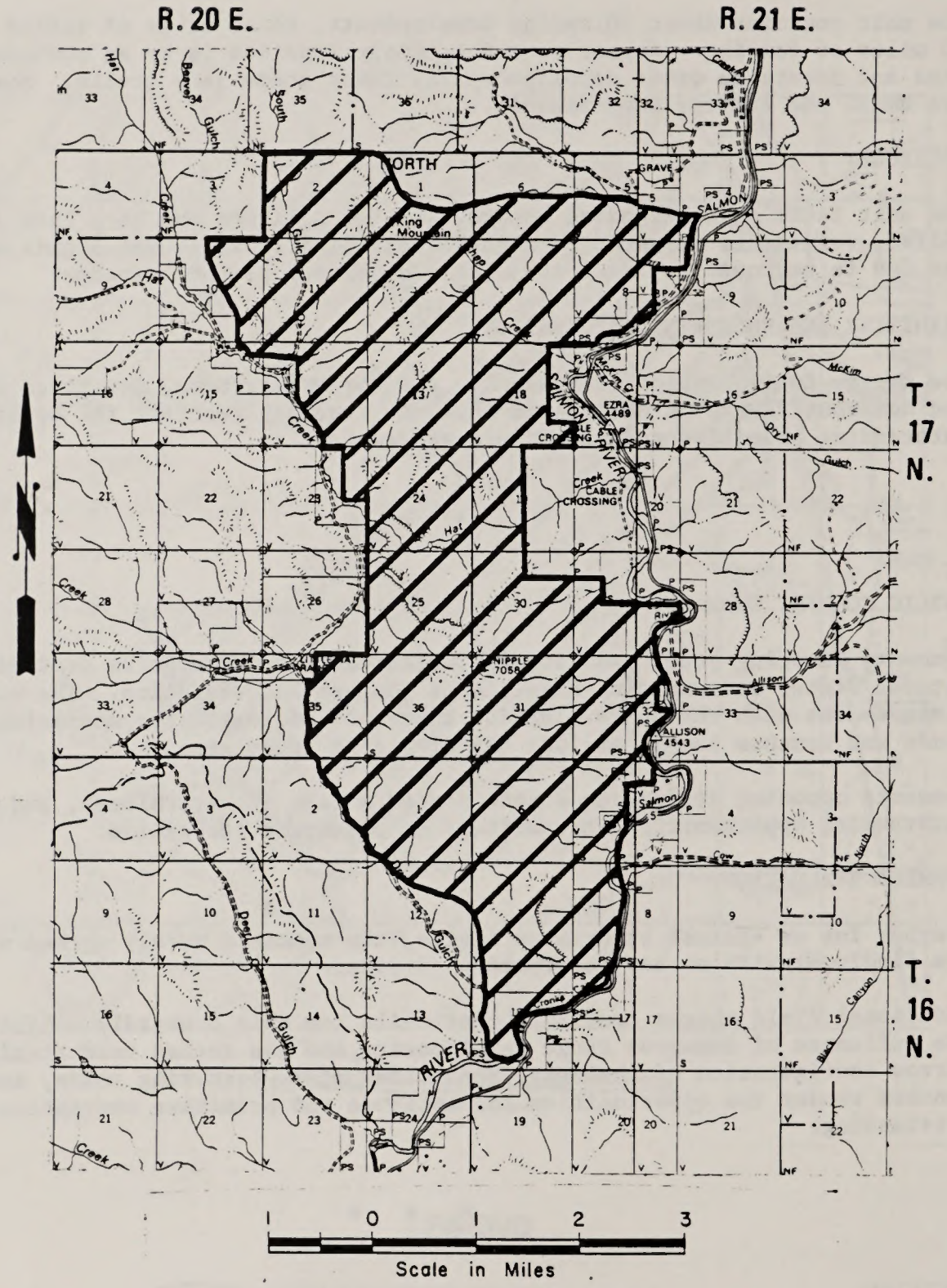
Additional field checks confirmed that while the unit outwardly exhibits a natural aspect, the influence of numerous range developments and the access roads/trails to them, the narrow configuration of the unit, restricted size, bordering roads, and highly developed ranches render the opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation less than outstanding.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

44–2
KING MOUNTAIN


R. 20 E.
R. 21 E.
T. 17 N.
T. 16 N.
NORTH
King Mountain
SALMON
RIVER
ALLISON
4543
NIPPLE
7058
EZRA
4489
CABLE CROSSING
Beaver Gulch
South
Hat
Creek
Deer
Gulch
McKim
Gulch
Allison
Salmon
Cow
North
Black
Canyon
Cronks
Canyon
Creek
Gulch
Creek
Creek
Creek

44-2 KING MOUNTAIN

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 12,602 acres of BLM land with a 640-acre State land inholding. It is located north of Ellis, and is in a long narrow shape, bounded by Dry Gulch Road, Hat Creek Road, King Mountain Road, and Highway 93. Topography of the unit is characterized by a dominant north-south ridge cut deeply by Hat Creek in the middle. Vegetation is primarily sagebrush-grass, with numerous rock outcroppings.

NATURALNESS:

Existing intrusions within the unit are not visually evident or prominent in the landscape. Bordering areas are highly developed cattle ranches. The unit retains a natural appearance.

SOLITUDE:

The narrow single ridge configuration makes it extremely difficult to avoid the sights and sounds of man both within and outside the unit. Therefore, solitude opportunities are considered less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The size and configuration of the unit severely confine the potential to provide an outstanding opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Cronks Canyon and the confluence of Big and Little Hat Creek possess both geologic and scenic values due to steep deeply cut canyon walls and narrow stream bottoms.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments favoring study area status considered this unit as part of a cluster of four areas adjacent to the Salmon River. It was stated that the area met the naturalness criteria, and provided outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation. Lack of vegetative screening and visibility of roads and ranches outside the unit should not be valid criteria for dropping the unit.

Comments opposing study area status agreed that the unit lacked outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and stated a lack of naturalness.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

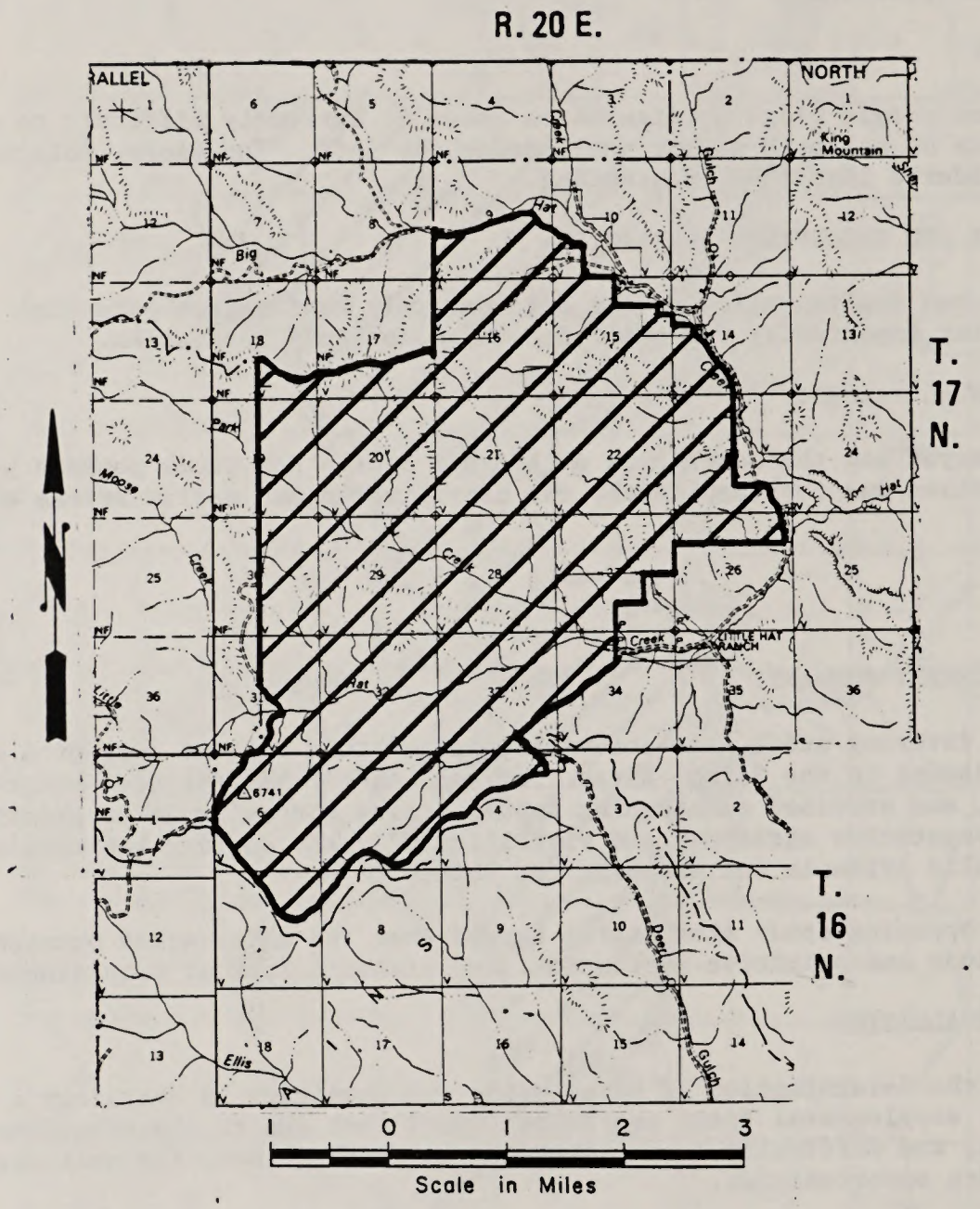
Although the determination of outstanding opportunities is certainly a subjective judgment, supplemental field checks confirmed that due to the size, shape, lack of screening, and difficulty in avoiding the imprints of man, the unit does not contain outstanding opportunities.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

44–3
HAT CREEK



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

44-3 HAT CREEK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 9,707 acres of BLM land with a 520-acre State land inholding. This BLM acreage figure differs from the 10,227 acres shown in the August 1979 report due to the inadvertent inclusion of the State acreage in the August report. The unit is located northwest of Ellis. Topography and vegetation are characterized by sagebrush-grass covered rolling hills drained by Little and Big Hat Creeks. Slopes are relatively gentle and east-facing.

NATURALNESS:

The unit contains 15 spring developments, two miles of fence line and several miles of jeep trails. These developments are subordinate to the overall landscape, with the unit retaining its natural appearance.

SOLITUDE:

The open slopes and lack of vegetative screening combined with the presence of surrounding roads and ranches on Hat Creek do not provide opportunities for solitude that are considered outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The unit is contained by surrounding roads and developed lands and is of a size which does not offer opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation that are considered outstanding.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments favoring study area status considered this unit as part of a cluster of four areas adjacent to the Salmon River. It was stated that the area met the naturalness criteria, and provided outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation. Lack of vegetative screening and visibility of roads and ranches outside the unit should not be valid criteria for dropping the unit.

Comments opposing study area status agreed that the unit lacked outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and stated a lack of naturalness.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

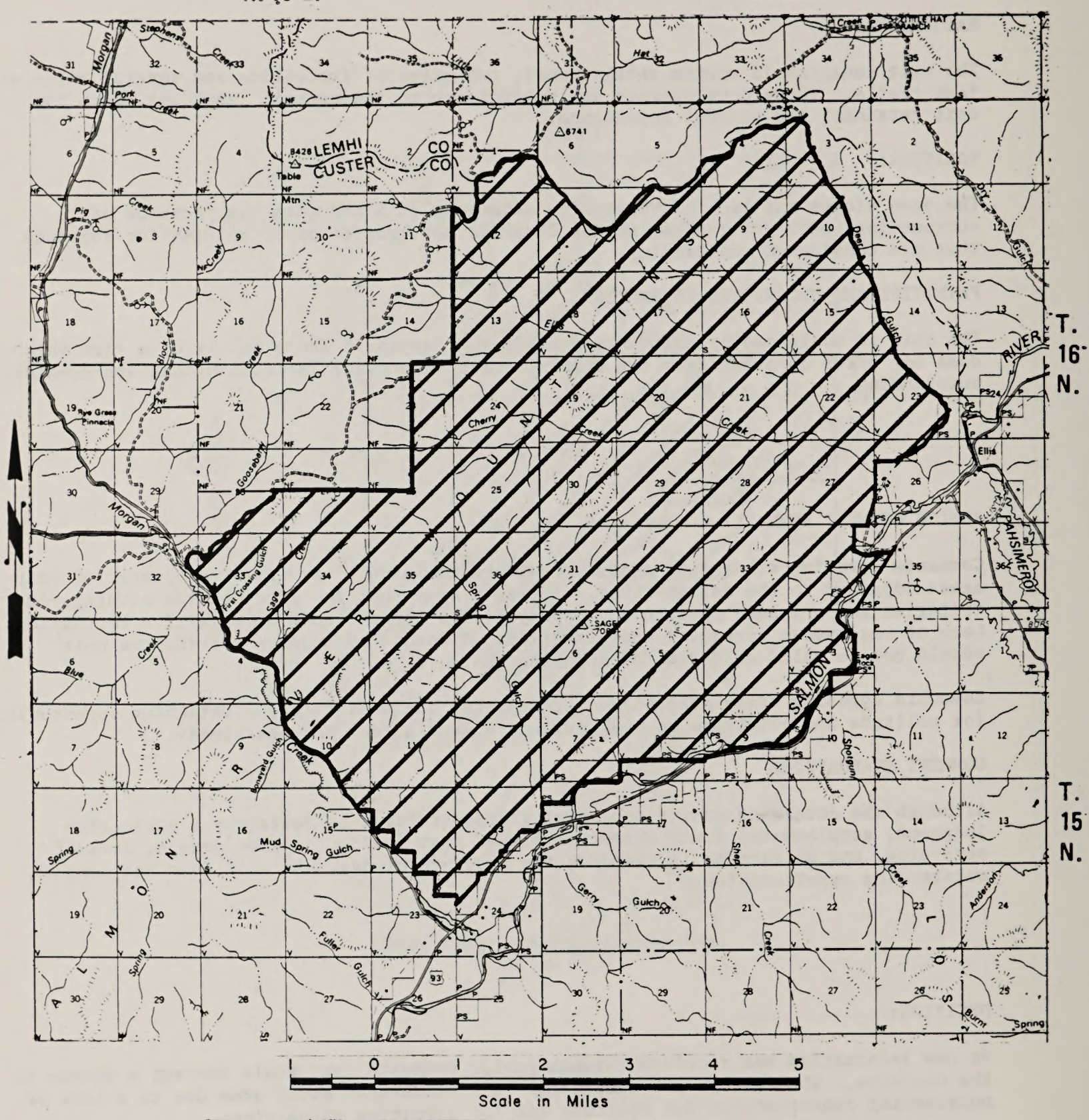
Although the determination of outstanding opportunities is certainly a subjective judgment, supplemental field checks confirmed that due to the size, shape, lack of screening, and difficulty in avoiding the imprints of man, the unit does not contain outstanding opportunities.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

44–4
ELLIS CREEK



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

44-4 ELLIS CREEK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 28,040 total acres, including 1,280 acres of State lands involved in the Donkey Hills exchange. This BLM acreage figure differs from the 28,790 acres shown in the August 1979 report due to a more accurate calculation of acreage. The August report failed to mention that State acres were included in the total. The unit is located west of Ellis. Topography and vegetation are characterized by sagebrush-grass rolling hills drained to the southeast by Morgan Creek, Spring Gulch, Cherry Creek, Ellis Creek, and Deer Gulch. Slopes are generally steep along the Salmon River and flatten out as distance from the river increases.

NATURALNESS:

The unit contains numerous spring developments, fences, and pipelines. Two constructed roads intrude into the unit and numerous jeep trails provide access to range developments. These developments are visually subordinate due to the large size of the unit.

SOLITUDE:

An outstanding opportunity for solitude does not exist due to the proximity of surrounding ranches and roads; and range developments and a lack of vegetative screening within the unit.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation exist but are not outstanding due to the constraints of surrounding and interior roads and other imprints of man.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments favoring study area status considered this unit as part of a cluster of four areas adjacent to the Salmon River. It was stated that the area met the naturalness criteria, and provided outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation. Lack of vegetative screening and visibility of roads and ranches outside the unit should not be valid criteria for dropping the unit.

Comments opposing study area status agreed that the unit lacked outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and stated a lack of naturalness.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

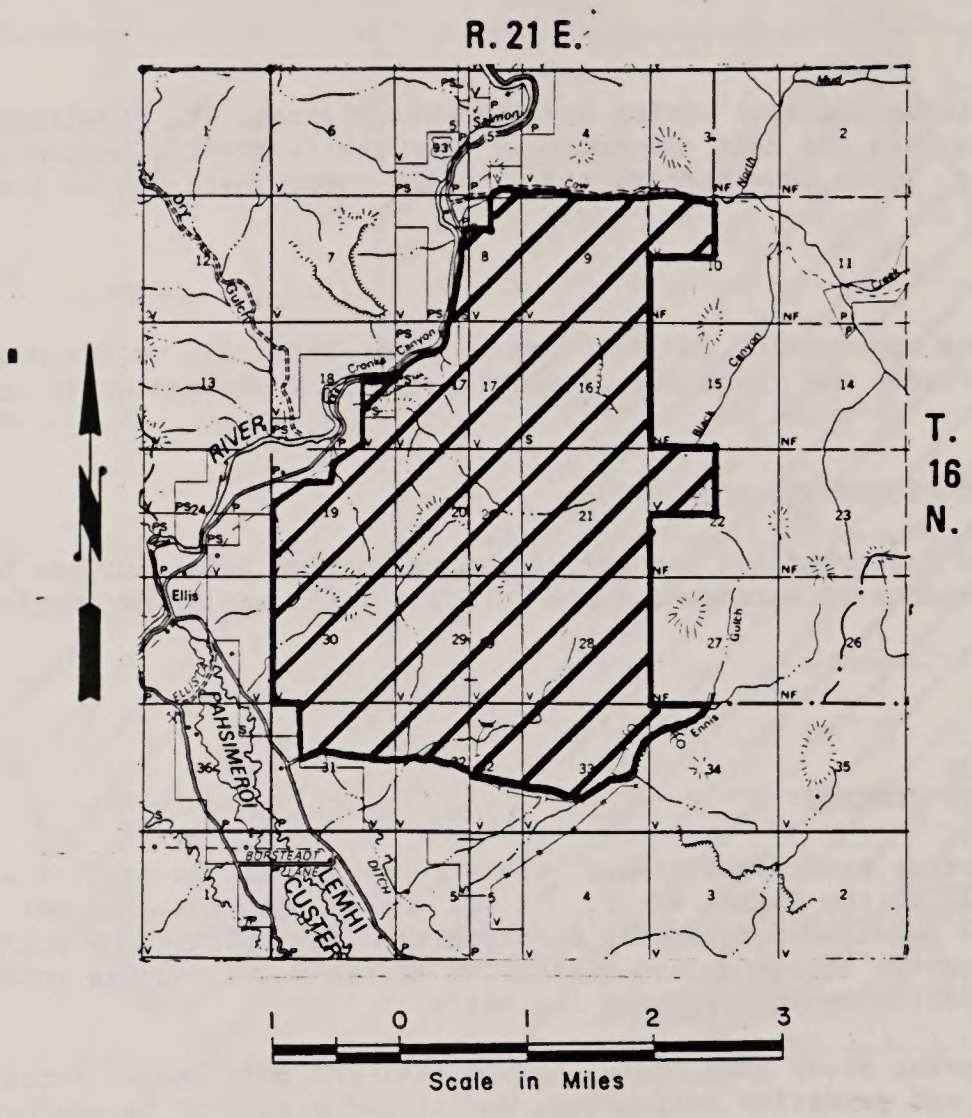
Although the determination of outstanding opportunities is certainly a subjective judgment, supplemental field checks confirmed that due to the size, shape, lack of screening, and difficulty in avoiding the imprints of man, the unit does not contain outstanding opportunities.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

44–9
CRONKS CANYON



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

44-9 CRONKS CANYON

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains a total of 7,470 acres which includes 640 acres of State lands involved in the Donkey Hills land exchange. The August 1979 report did not indicate that the State acreage was included in the total. The unit is located east of Ellis. Topography is composed of steep slopes rising from 5,600 feet at the Salmon River to the Forest Service border 8,200 feet. Vegetation is sparse sagebrush-grass.

NATURALNESS:

The unit has retained its natural appearance due to the small amount of developments and steep slopes.

SOLITUDE:

While solitude is possible, the proximity of Highway 93 and the Pahsimeroi Road combined with the small size of the unit render the opportunities less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Opportunities are limited due to steep terrain and small unit size. The recreation opportunities are considered less than outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Cronks Canyon offers supplemental values in the form of geologic and scenic views.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments favoring study area status considered this unit as part of a cluster of four areas adjacent to the Salmon River. It was stated that the area met the naturalness criteria, and provided outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation. Lack of vegetative screening and visibility of roads and ranches outside the unit should not be valid criteria for dropping the unit.

Comments opposing study area status agreed that the unit lacked outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and stated a lack of naturalness.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

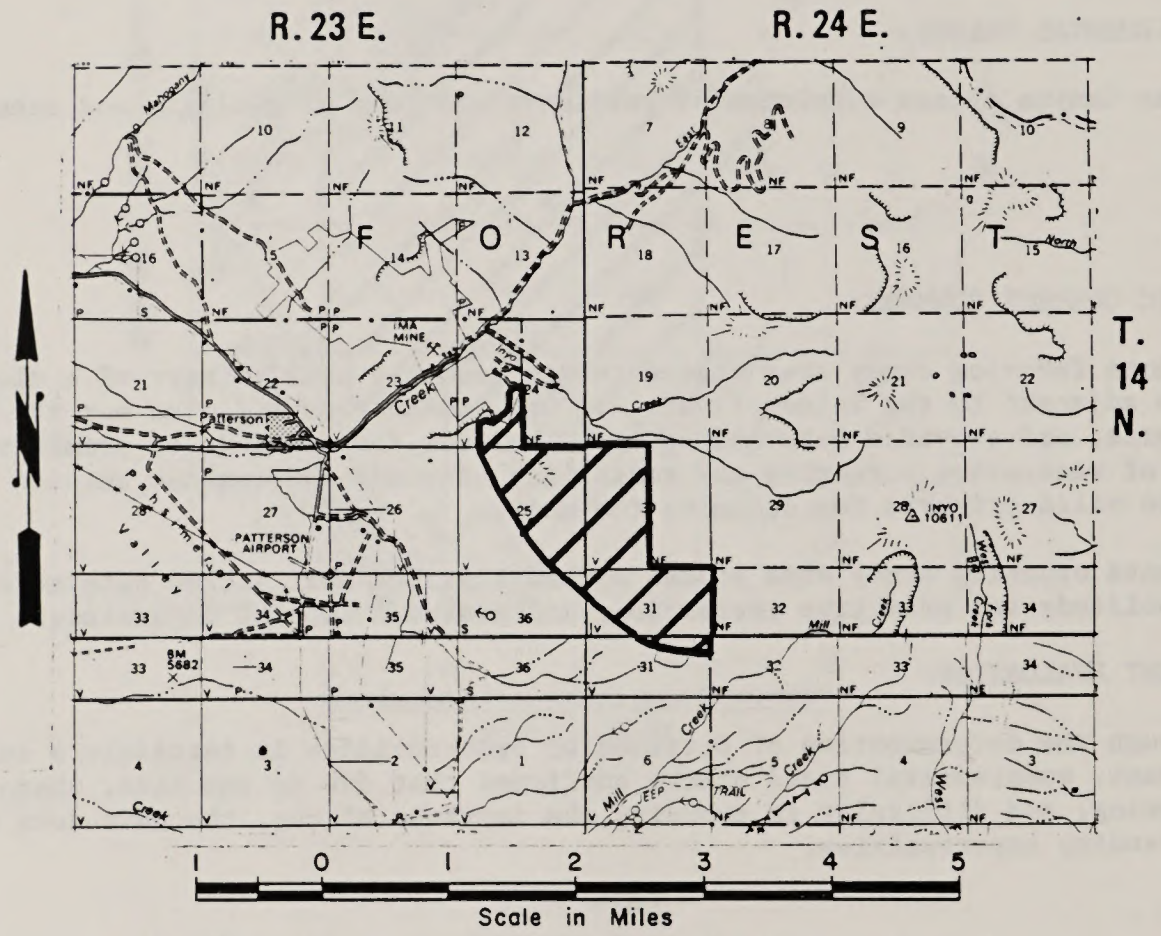
Although the determination of outstanding opportunities is certainly a subjective judgment, supplemental field checks confirmed that due to the size, shape, lack of screening, and difficulty in avoiding the imprints of man, the unit does not contain outstanding opportunities.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

45–5
MILL CREEK



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

45-5 MILL CREEK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 1,330 acres of BLM lands and borders U. S. Forest Service lands on the east. The unit is located north of Goldburg. The contiguous border with RARE II Area 4-503 has been reduced by about half due to the President's RARE II recommendations. This has left the unit sticking out like a thumb from non-wilderness lands.

NATURALNESS:

There are no impacts on naturalness within the unit. Exterior impacts--roads, mining prospects, etc.--border the unit.

SOLITUDE:

Outstanding opportunities for solitude would be possible if the unit were joined with the RARE II area in a good configuration, however, the size, shape, and configuration of the unit where it joins with the RARE II area, render the opportunities less than outstanding on the BLM parcel.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Opportunities are severely restricted by the confining boundaries and size of the BLM parcel, so as to render the opportunities less than outstanding.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments favoring study area status stated that the unit should be allocated to wilderness along with the adjacent RARE II area.

Comments opposed to study area status felt the unit was not natural and lacked outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

New data related to wilderness characteristics was not provided through the public comments.

* * *

DECISION:

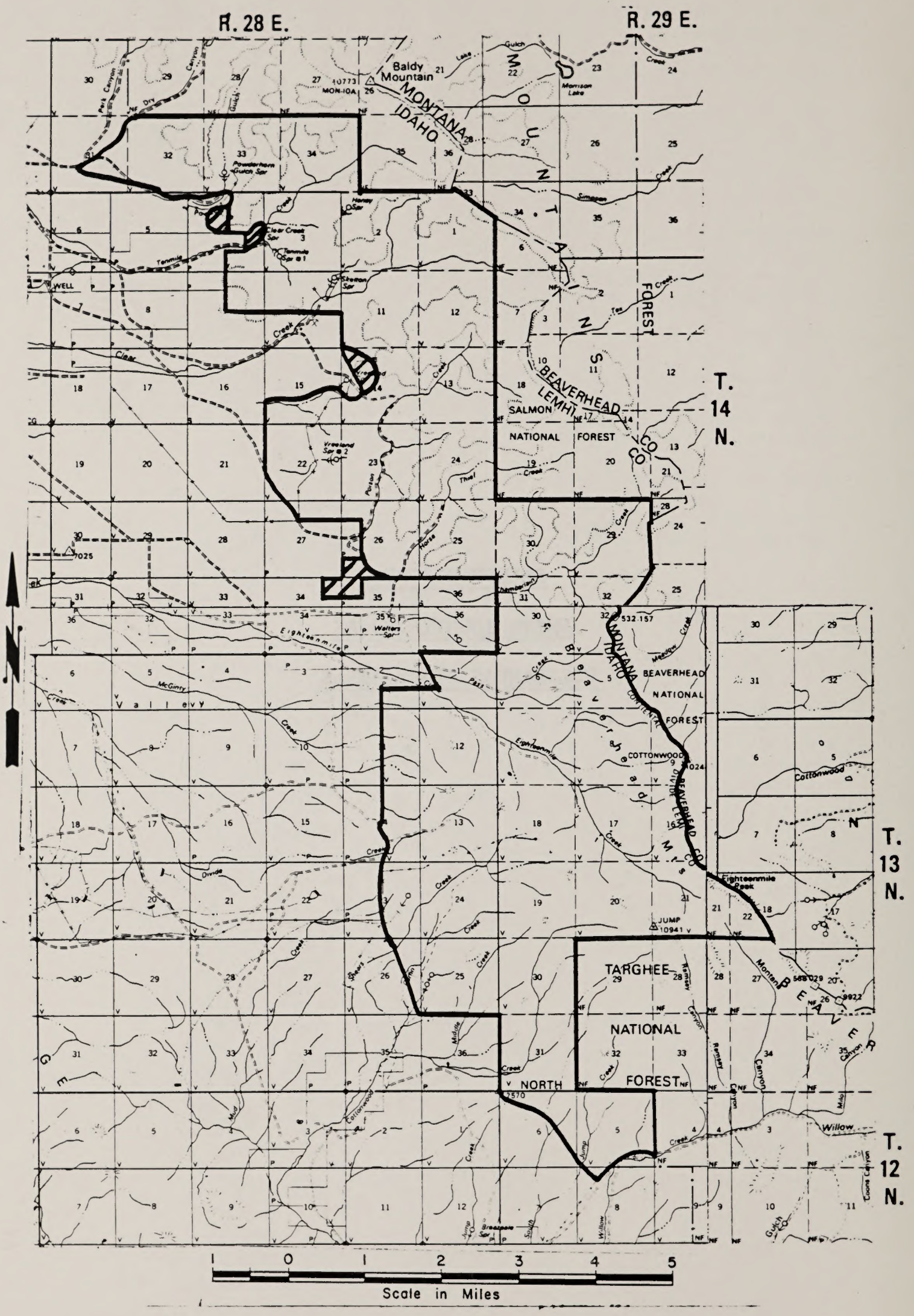
No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation.

SALMON DISTRICT

UNITS IDENTIFIED AS

WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

43–3
EIGHTEEN MILE



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

43-3 EIGHTEEN MILE

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 24,922 acres of BLM land. This figure differs from the 19,280 acres shown in the August 1979 report. During intensive inventory it was felt that the initial inventory boundary, drawn along an elevation line on most of the western side, had been incorrectly located; while it more accurately should have followed the land ownership pattern in most instances. The unit is located along the Idaho side of the Continental Divide from Baldy Mountain south to Eighteenmile Peak. The unit is contiguous with RARE II Area M4-945 Italian Peak which has been recommended for further planning. The topography is mountainous with numerous deep creek valleys draining into Eighteenmile Creek to the west. The Continental Divide offers rolling meadows and precipitous cliffs. Elevation varies from 7,600 to 11,141 feet. Vegetation varies from lowland sage-grass communities up through Douglas fir, lodgepole pine and limber pine to grassy meadows on the Divide. Willow-aspen riparian vegetation occupies most creek bottoms.

NATURALNESS:

The imprint of man in the unit is largely unnoticeable. A few range developments exist, the most prominent being a ditch leading from Shears Creek to several water holes. Mining is taking place in Clear Creek just outside the unit's border. During field inventory the natural area was found to include some 4,882 acres initially thought to be vegetatively impacted.

SOLITUDE:

The rugged terrain, vegetative screening, remoteness, and limited accessibility of the unit provide for an outstanding opportunity for solitude.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The unit offers outstanding opportunities for backpacking, rockhounding, hunting, wildlife viewing, and cross-country skiing.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Supplemental values include the reported sighting of wolves and endangered species in the vicinity.

REHABILITATION:

Several short jeep trails exist which could revegetate easily if left unused.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments favoring study area status stated:

- Limited access to the area would control future use and assure continued opportunity for solitude.
- Area provides the type of unconfined recreation people are looking for.
- Unit contains varied wildlife and mountainous terrain; proximity to wolf habitat area.
- Unit contains wild undisturbed terrain with outstanding solitude and recreation; excellent for backpacking.
- Contains few imprints of man; is removed from man's external influences.

Comments opposing study area status indicated:

- Road goes up Clear Creek to Eighteen Mile Creek to Nicholia.
- Fences and old homesteads in area affect naturalness.
- Area contains mining prospects; mining deposits.
- Two wheel paths (roads) necessary for livestock management cover the area.
- Unit does not offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

The road from Clear Creek past Eighteen Mile Creek to Nicholia was recognized as a road and forms a portion of the western boundary of the unit.

The area west of the unit is divided up by a maze of high quality impenetrable woven wire sheep fences. None of these fences penetrate the unit although some define the unit border. Several less highly developed fences occur within the unit. None of the old homesteads are within the unit.

Mining areas have been excluded from the unit. The occurrence of mineral deposits has no bearing on the determination of wilderness characteristics.

Primitive two-wheel tracks extend for short distances up Shears, Eighteen Mile, Pass and Poison Creeks. None of these tracks appear to have been constructed or maintained.

The reference to rehabilitation in the proposed decision was to areas that already met the naturalness criteria, not to areas that did not.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 24,922 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness, and the solitude-recreation criteria.

45-12 BURNT CREEK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 30,110 acres of BLM land, with a 640-acre State inholding. This unit was identified in the August 1979 report as containing 20,000 acres, with lands only in the Salmon District. Due to a reevaluation of a previously identified road separating Units 45-12 and 32-16, some acreage from Unit 32-16 in the Idaho Falls District has been added to Unit 45-12. The unit lies southwest of Taylor Mountain and is bounded on the south by U. S. Forest Service RARE II Area 4-210 Borah Peak, which has been recommended for wilderness status. The unit is contiguous to the RARE II area for 13 miles. The eastern portion is characterized by an open and sloping sage-grass covered area. The western portion is steep, hilly terrain and vegetation includes scattered stands of Douglas fir and juniper. Several large rock outcrops occur in the west portion.

NATURALNESS:

The majority of the unit has retained a natural appearance. The inventory identified two road systems: one leading south from the Dry Creek Road to private land at Buck Springs, the other runs between Squaw Creek and Buck Springs, which includes a short spur road to Camp Springs. These roads trim 2,590 acres from the unit.

Several range developments exist in the form of watering troughs and reservoirs, however, these developments are localized and do not have an impact on the unit as a whole. Most access routes to the developments are not heavily used and require 4-wheel drive vehicles. The old Dry Creek Reservoir is hardly noticeable. Man-made imprints are not substantial within the western portion of the unit.

SOLITUDE:

Topographic and vegetative screening in the eastern portion of the unit is considered minimal, and when combined with a somewhat irregular configuration renders opportunities for solitude less than outstanding. The unit is therefore decreased by 2,540 acres. The eastern portion is separated from the west by the high ridge north of Squaw Creek. In the western portion due to the large size, excellent topographic relief, moderate vegetative screening, lack of nearby development, and remoteness of the unit, an outstanding opportunity for solitude does exist.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities are considered less than outstanding in the eastern portion due to the narrow corridor between the road to Camp Springs and nearby private and State land. This narrow corridor, 1/3 - 1/2 mile wide, is considered a constricting factor which limits primitive unconfined recreation.

Within the larger western portion, there are no continuing barriers or man-made developments to limit recreation activities. Opportunities include hiking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, camping and backpacking. The combination of interesting natural features and diversity of recreation opportunities in the western portion are considered outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The western portion of the unit has been identified as important elk winter range. Archaeological sites within the unit include hunting blinds, rock shelters, and surface lithic scatters.

REHABILITATION:

Areas disturbed for water developments and jeep trails could be rehabilitated.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments favoring study area status indicated:

- The unit has outstanding scenery and camping when combined with the Borah Peak, RARE II area.
- Unit is in undisturbed condition, few imprints of man.
- Unit is of large size.
- Great area to experience diversity and quality of wilderness activity.
- Area contains excellent riparian vegetation and a wide variety of desert plants.
- The road, which BLM identified up Short Creek, is not a road; has not been improved or maintained.

Comments opposing study area status stated that jeep trails are all over area, a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and a lack of naturalness.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Additional field checks were completed, based on public comment. The road up Short Creek was constructed by the BLM in 1970 and shows evidence of cuts and fills. Therefore, it remains identified as a road, forming a portion of the unit boundary.

While there are jeep trails all over the area to the north of the unit, they do not carry over into the unit except as noted in the proposed decision.

The reference to rehabilitation in the proposed decision was to areas that already met the naturalness criteria, not to areas that did not.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 24,980 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

BURNT CREEK

R. 23 E. R. 24 E. R. 24½ E. R. 25 E.

T. 10 N.

T. 9 N.

BUTTE CO

ALLIS

NATIONAL

Garrett Rock

Elkhorn

Long

Parson Springs

Squaw

Short Spring No 1

Middle Spring

Short Spring No 2

Squawtit

Short Cr Spr No 3

Baby Cr Spr

Long Cr Spring

Dry Creek Spring No 1

Dry Creek Spring No 2

Rock of Ages

Burnt Creek Lake

DRY CREEK RES

WATER TANK

Taylor Mountain

Dry Creek

Red Hills

Coral

QUARTER

Buck Springs

Camp Spring

Massacre Creek

Chicken Creek

Copper Lake

Scale in Miles

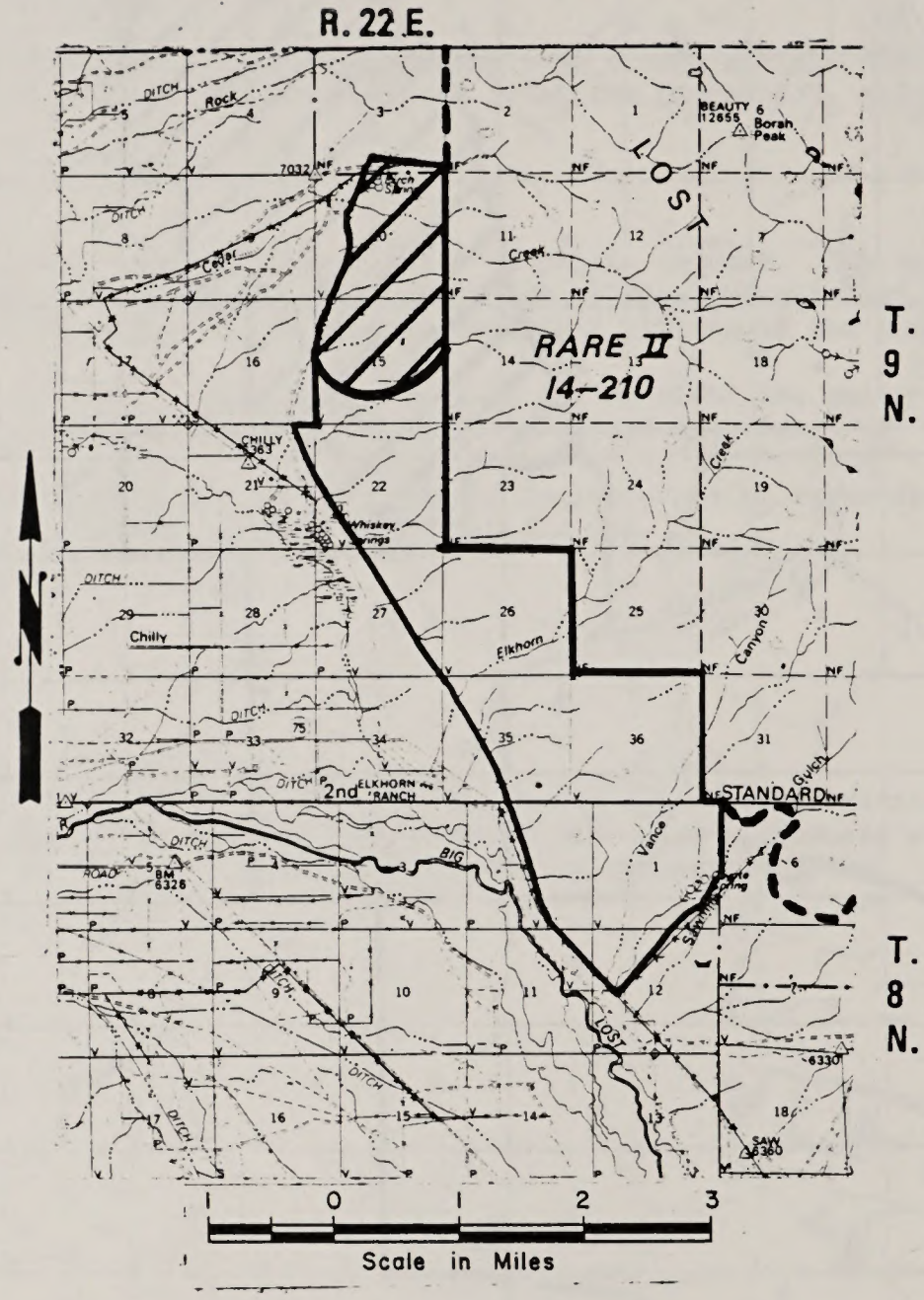
1 0 1 2 3 4 5

LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

47–4
BORAH PEAK



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

47-4 BORAH PEAK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 3,880 acres of BLM land with a 640-acre State inholding. This figure differs from the 4,594 acres shown in the August 1979 report due to the previous inclusion of the State acreage with the BLM land, and an additional change due to a recalculation of acreage. The unit is located east of Chilly, and west of Borah Peak. Topography is relatively steep and west sloping. Vegetation is sagebrush-grass with scattered mountain mahogany. The unit has a six mile common border with the proposed RARE II wilderness area 4-210, Borah Peak. The northern 780 acres of the unit are not contiguous to the RARE II area due to boundary modifications.

NATURALNESS:

The unit has retained a natural appearance. Most areas of disturbance have occurred in the northern end of the unit around Birch Springs. Powerlines and a telephone line along the west boundary are obvious external negative influences.

SOLITUDE:

Outstanding opportunities may be present in the BLM unit and are definitely present when the unit is considered as a portion of the larger BLM/FS area.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

No constraints exist to limit an outstanding opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation, when considered with the contiguous RARE II area.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The principal supplemental value is the unit's proximity to Borah Peak and Leatherman Peak.

REHABILITATION:

Disturbed areas could be restored.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that favored study area status indicated:

- Unit is in undisturbed condition with few imprints of man.
- Unit contains outstanding scenery and camping when combined with the Borah Peak RARE II area.
- A great area to experience diversity and quality of wilderness activity.

Comments opposed to study area status stated:

- Highway 93 is along the entire length of the unit, vehicle noise is evident.
- The unit surrounds a State section with a sheep camp on it.
- Telephone and powerlines run across the unit; two old logging trails are visible.
- Unit is in the path of Air Force jet training route 302.
- The size of the unit at 3,100 acres is below the 5,000-acre minimum.
- Many roads lead to water troughs and salt licks.
- Unit has poor recreation possibilities; it's simply a hillside.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Highway 93 does run the length of the unit on the west side, however, the unit boundary is the uppermost utility line east of the highway. No utility lines are within the unit.

The State section is not included in the acreage and was not inventoried for wilderness characteristics. It appears blocked within the unit due to the contiguous Forest Service RARE II area on the east.

No water troughs are within the unit, and only two very rough old jeep trails have been noted in the unit.

The unit meets the size criteria, and the solitude-recreation criteria when considered as a part of a larger block of land with the contiguous RARE II area, 4-210, Borah Peak. This option of considering small blocks of BLM land when adjacent to RARE II areas is provided in Bureau wilderness inventory policy.

* * *

DECISION:

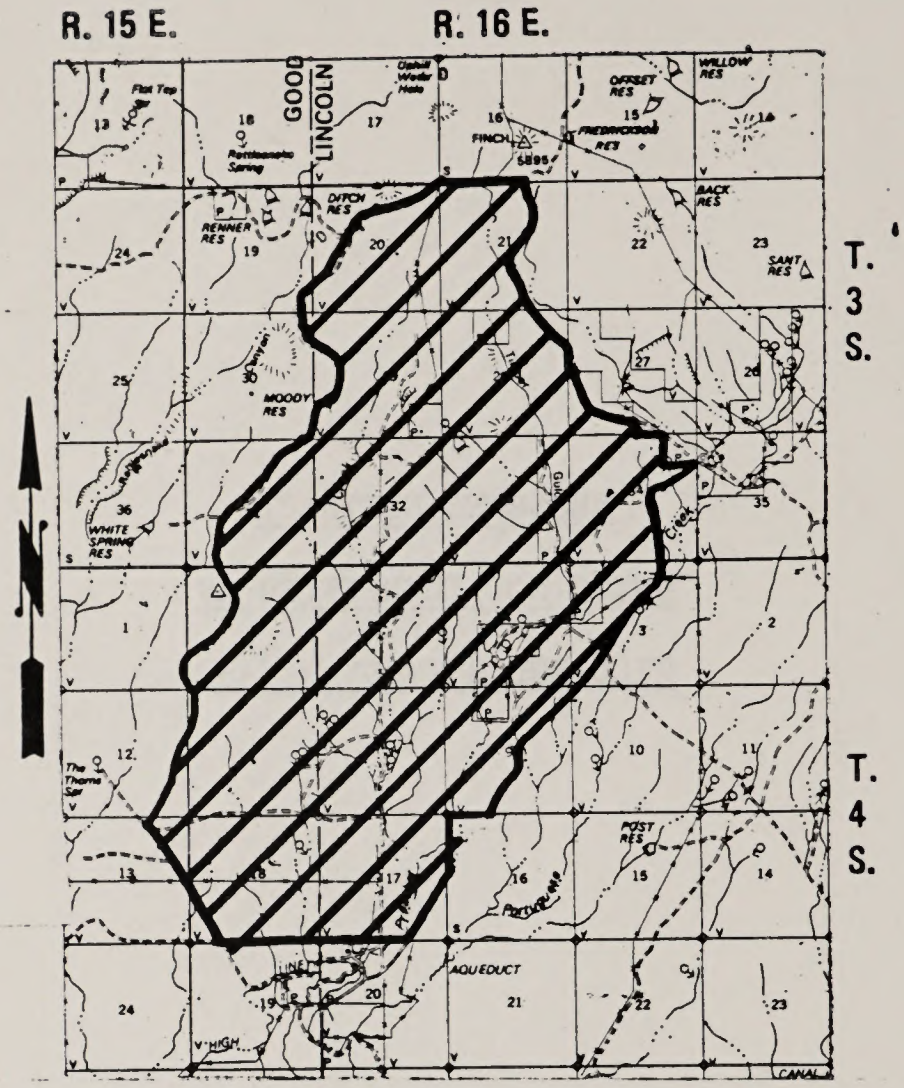
No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 3,100 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness criteria, and when considered with the contiguous RARE II area, meets the size, and the solitude-recreation criteria.

SHOSHONE DISTRICT

UNITS NOT IDENTIFIED AS

WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

54–3
PREACHER CREEK



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

54-3 PREACHER CREEK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 8,827 acres of BLM land, with 480 acres of private land inholdings. This figure differs from the 7,641 acres shown in the August 1979 report. A calculating error adds 239 acres of land, due to more accurate calculation methods. A 947 acre parcel has been added because it has been determined that a road used as part of the boundary does not exist. The unit lies on the south facing side of the Mount Bennett Hills, fifteen miles northeast of Gooding. The southern portion is a flat prairie dissected by Preacher Creek and several small intermittent drainages. The northern portion rises 900 feet higher in elevation and has a more broken topography composed of hills, rhyolite rock outcrops, and several small canyons. Dominant vegetation throughout the unit is sagebrush and annual and perennial grasses. Cottonwoods and willows grow along the more shaded canyon bottoms.

NATURALNESS:

Several access routes have caused the deletion of a large parcel from the eastern side of the unit. These access routes and other developments present noticeable imprints on naturalness. Two additional routes, extend into that portion of the unit which still meets naturalness criteria. Several fences are within the unit. Four reservoirs, noticeable imprints on the naturalness of the unit, have been deleted. Excluding all major imprints of man, approximately 5,747 acres remain which contain some minor imprints on naturalness.

SOLITUDE:

Although it may be possible to find opportunities for solitude due to local topographic screening within portions of the unit, the small size, narrow configuration, and poor vegetative screening do not afford opportunities that are considered outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The unit's small size, lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions, and lack of significant physical challenge associated with primitive recreation render the recreational opportunities less than outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains golden eagle nesting sites, archeological sites, and an important deer wintering area.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that opposed study area identification stated a lack of naturalness due to imprints of man.

Specific reasons for requesting study area identification for the unit were as follows:

- Naturalness criteria has been met.
- The unit offers outstanding opportunities for solitude because of canyons and riparian vegetation.
- Various supplemental values are present in the unit.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

Contrary to some public comment the unit does meet the naturalness criteria.

Solitude and Primitive Recreation:

The proposed decision stated that the unit lacked outstanding opportunities for solitude due to sparse vegetative screening, narrow configuration, and small size. Primitive recreation opportunities are considered less than outstanding because the unit lacks exceptional or unusual natural features and it lacks significant physical challenge.

Supplemental Values:

The supplemental values mentioned were already noted in the proposed decision. These values cannot qualify a unit as a study area if other characteristics are lacking.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness in a portion of the unit, and to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

54-4 RATTLESNAKE CANYON

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 11,355 acres of BLM land with a 640 acre state land inholding. This figure differs from the 11,085 acres shown in the August 1979 report due to a more accurate calculation of acreage. The unit is located 10 miles north of Gooding on the south facing slope of the Mount Bennett Hills. Highway 46 lies just west of the unit. The southern portion is a gently sloping plain with several small intermittant drainages. The northern end rises in elevation and is cut by several canyons, the largest of which is Rattlesnake Canyon. These canyons are composed of the weathered rhyolite rock which is found throughout the north end of the unit. Dominant vegetation throughout the unit is sagebrush and annual and perennial grasses. Along the more shaded portions of the canyon bottoms there are willows and cottonwoods.

NATURALNESS:

An access route, which extends northwest from Thorn Springs, is the northern boundary of a parcel which should be deleted from the unit because it contains a concentration of imprints on naturalness. Another access route, which meets the road definition, extends into that portion of the unit which meets the naturalness criteria. Since this route is a road, the unit boundary should be altered to exclude the road and state land which the road intersects.

Numerous seedings, two spring developments, a small reservoir, and a small materials site are noticeable imprints on the apparent naturalness of the unit. After deletions are made to eliminate major imprints of man, 5,169 acres remain.

SOLITUDE:

Although it may be possible to find opportunities for solitude in some areas of the unit due to local topographic screening within Rattlesnake Canyon, the small size, narrow configuration, and poor vegetative screening do not afford opportunities that are considered outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The unit's small size, lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions, and lack of significant physical challenge associated with primitive recreation render the recreational opportunities less than outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains several archaeological sites and prairie falcon nesting sites.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that opposed study area identification stated a lack of naturalness, due to imprints of man.

Specific reasons for requesting study area identification for the unit were as follows:

- The unit meets the naturalness criteria.
- The unit has outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.
- Various supplemental values are present.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

The proposed decision deleted 6,186 acres from the unit because of noticeable imprints of man in several parcels. None of the comments that addressed naturalness offered new information which would indicate that any of the deleted parcels meet the naturalness criteria. The remaining 5,169 acres do meet the naturalness criteria.

Solitude:

The proposed decision determined that opportunities for solitude were considered less than outstanding because the unit has sparse vegetative screening, is small, and has a narrow configuration. Several comments indicated that the unit met the solitude criteria. Some comments stated that narrow canyons and riparian vegetation provide outstanding opportunities.

Only a small portion of the unit actually provides screening. The topography of the unit is such that most visitor use would concentrate in these limited areas and make visual contact with others likely. This situation provides significantly less than an outstanding opportunity for solitude.

Primitive Recreation:

Primitive recreation opportunities are considered less than outstanding because the unit lacks exceptional or unusual natural features, and lacks significant physical challenge. Although several comments indicated that the unit met the primitive recreation criteria, none specified what elements of outstanding primitive recreation were present in the unit.

Supplemental Values:

Goats, as mentioned in public comments, are not known to be present in the unit. Most other supplemental values were noted in the proposed decision. The presence of supplemental values when essential wilderness characteristics are lacking does not qualify the unit as a study area.

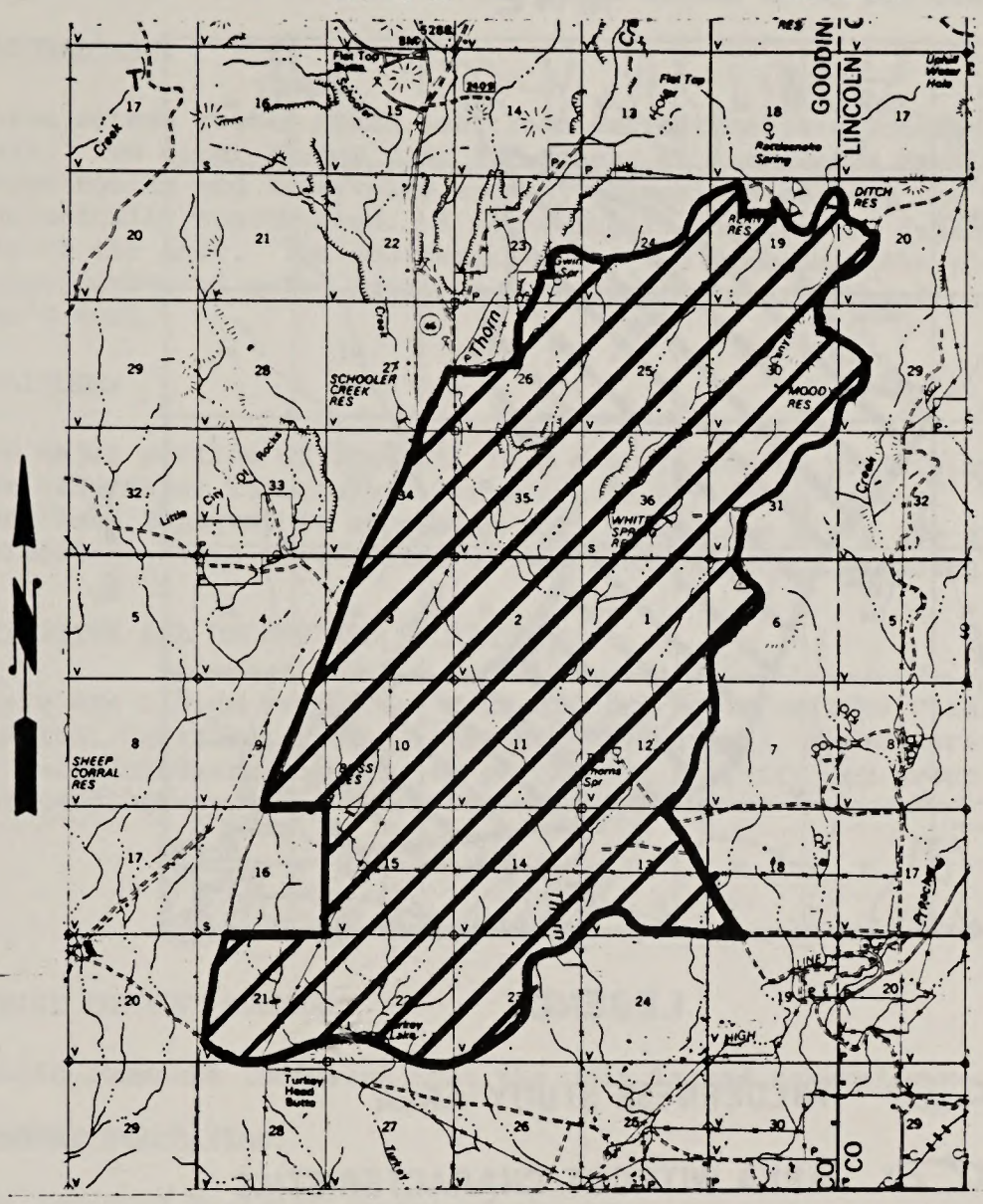
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DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness in a portion of the unit, and to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

54–4

RATTLESNAKE CANYON



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

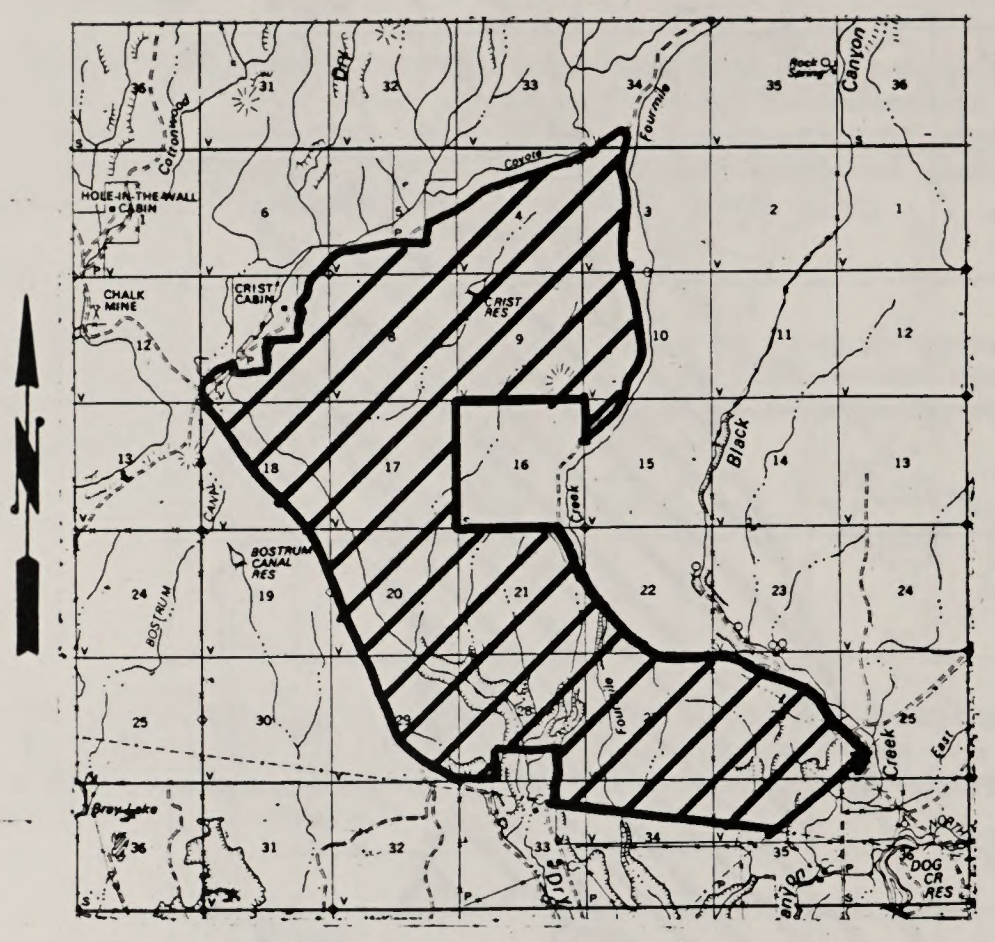
AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

54–7
FOUR MILE BENCH

R. 14 E.



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

54-7 FOUR MILE BENCH

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics:

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 7,542 acres of BLM land. The unit lies on the southernmost terrace of the Mount Bennett Hills, nine miles northwest of Gooding. Most of the unit is composed of a flat prairie bench, rising gently to the north. Dry Creek, a perennial stream, runs near the western edge of the unit and cuts a deep basalt canyon as it flows south. The main vegetation in the unit is sagebrush and annual and perennial grasses, with some pockets of willows and other shrubs along Dry Creek.

NATURALNESS:

Three access routes which meet road definition, are located in the southern portion of the unit. Two other routes used for access to reservoirs are located in the northern portion. Those routes and reservoirs are major imprints of man; the reservoirs have been mechanically constructed. A mechanically constructed canal bed crosses the western tip of the unit. The southeast tip of the unit has been plowed and seeded. The large number of major imprints on naturalness provides a noticeable imprint of man's work.

SOLITUDE:

The major portion of the unit is a gently sloping prairie with little topographic relief. The only major topographic variation is Dry Creek Canyon. This deep canyon provides excellent topographic screening and the willows along the creek form pockets of vegetative screening. This combination allows visitors an outstanding opportunity to enjoy solitude.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

There are a wide variety of recreational opportunities within the unit, including hiking, camping, horseback riding, hunting, photography, and nature study. Although many types of recreation are possible no particular activity nor group of activities are considered outstanding.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Public comments indicated that the unit lacked naturalness, due to imprints of man.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

The proposed decision contained the same conclusion as the public comments.

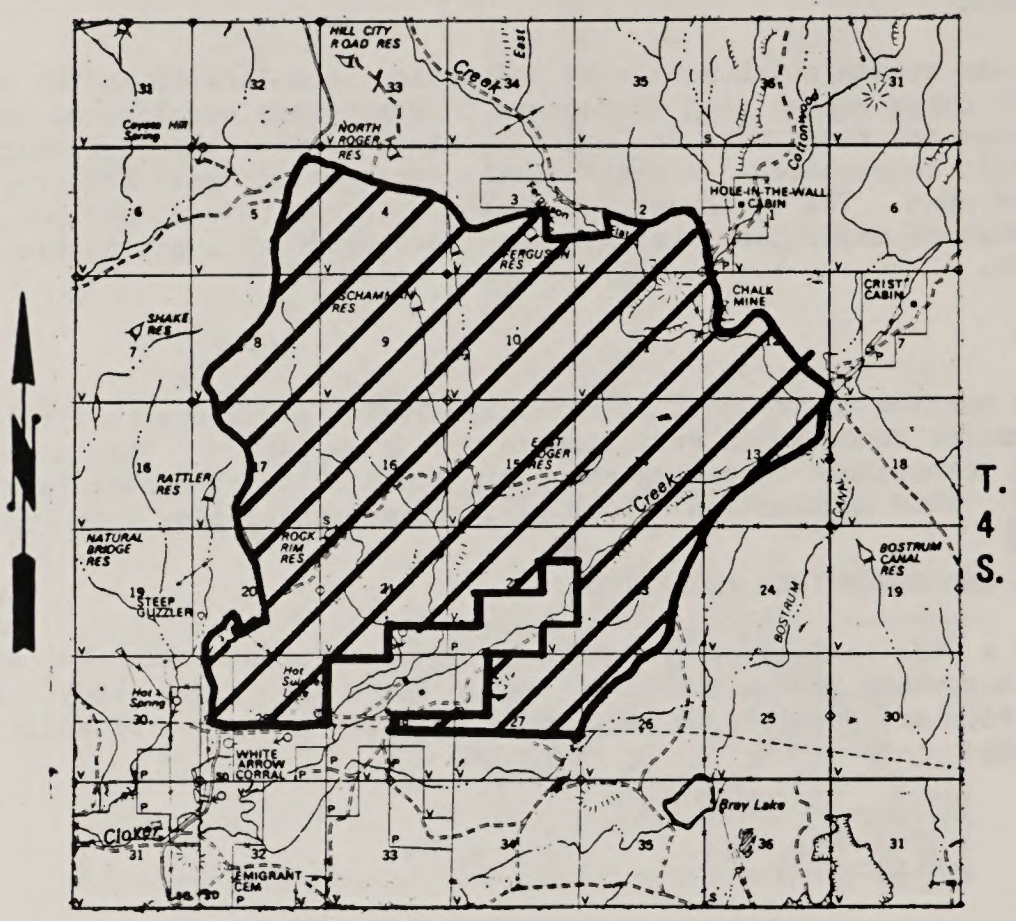
* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, and to a lack of outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation.

54–9
CLOVER CREEK

R. 13 E.



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

54-9 CLOVER CREEK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 8,455 acres of BLM land, with a 640 acre State land inholding. The unit lies on the south facing side of the Mount Bennett Hills, ten miles north of Bliss. The major portion of the unit is a gradually sloping plain of basalt. Clover Creek runs just inside the east boundary and has eroded a deep canyon through the cap layer of basalt. The major vegetation throughout the unit is sagebrush and annual and perennial grasses. Clover Creek Canyon has riparian vegetation characterized by willow, chokecherry, and serviceberry.

NATURALNESS:

Five access routes, which meet the road definition, have been identified in this small, flat unit. The two longest roads are used to service reservoir developments. Two short access routes, associated with the roads, have also been identified, but are not substantial imprints on naturalness. There are five mechanically constructed reservoirs, two small chalk mines and several fences within the unit. Because there are several minor and major imprints on naturalness throughout the unit, this concentration makes the unit fail to meet the naturalness criteria.

SOLITUDE:

Although it may be possible to find opportunities for solitude in some areas of the unit due to local topographic screening within Clover Creek, the small size, poor configuration, and poor vegetative screening do not offer opportunities that are considered outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The unit's small size, lack of exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions, and lack of significant physical challenge associated with primitive recreation render the opportunities less than outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains several archaeological sites, golden eagle and prairie falcon nesting sites, and sage grouse strutting grounds.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Public comments opposed the proposed decision not to identify the unit as a study area with no supporting rationale given. Other comments stated the unit lacked naturalness, due to imprints of man.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

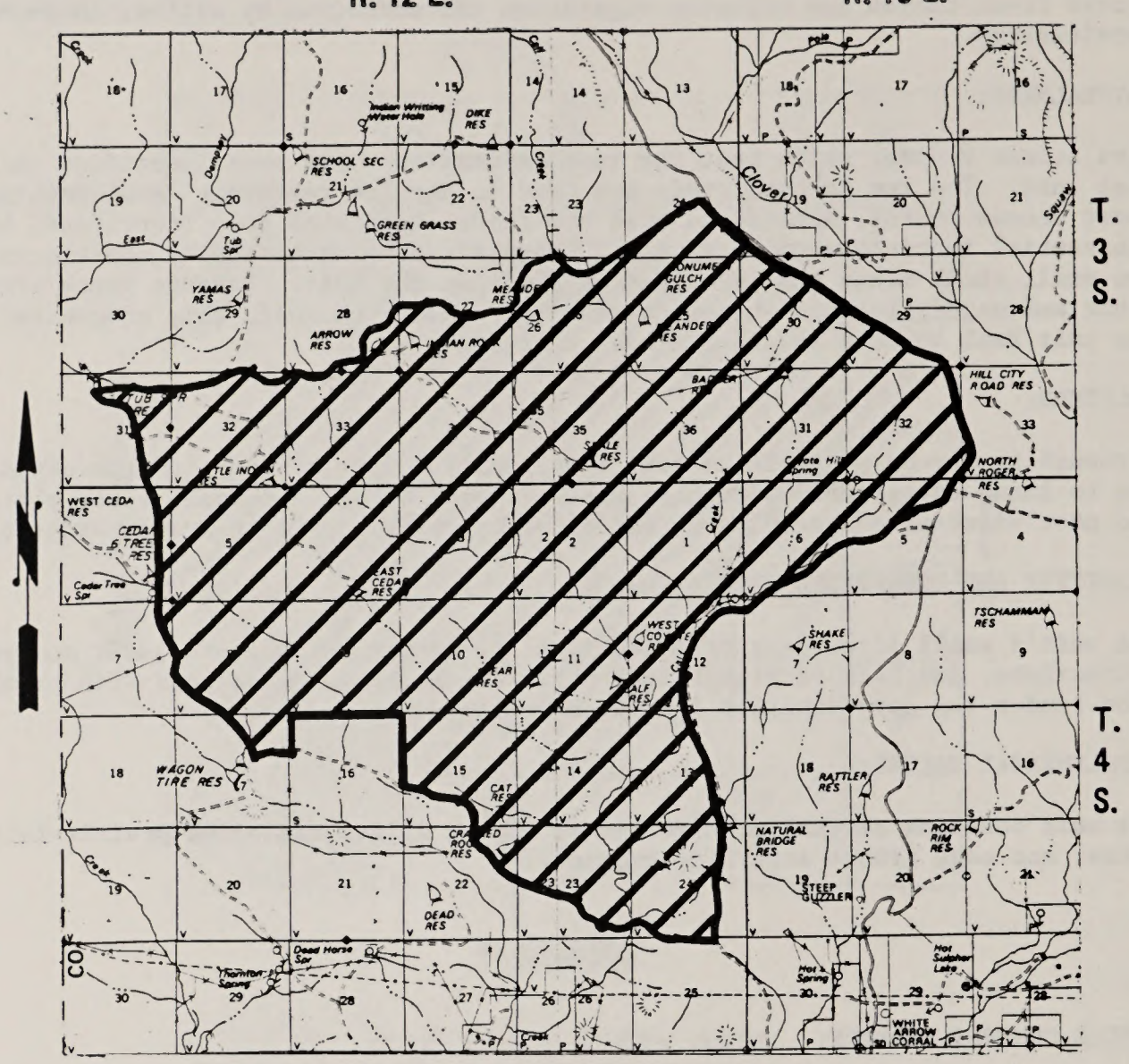
The proposed decision contained the same conclusion as public comments in reference to naturalness.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, and to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

54–11
INDIAN



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 16,968 acres of BLM land. The unit is located 12 miles north of Bliss on the south side of the Mount Bennett Hills. The major portion of the unit is a stepped prairie which rises gently to the north. Calf Creek Canyon and its branches cut the prairie table top in several places. In the south end of its drainage, Calf Creek is a perennial stream. Dominant vegetation throughout the unit is sagebrush and annual and perennial grasses. There are some pockets of willow and other shrubs along Calf Creek.

NATURALNESS:

There are two developed springs within the unit, a seeding at the south tip, and several fences. The unit contains a total of 13 access routes and 14 reservoirs. All of the reservoirs and six of the access routes have definite signs of mechanical construction. Because these imprints on naturalness are distributed throughout the unit, it fails to meet the naturalness criteria.

SOLITUDE:

The southeastern portion of the unit where Calf Creek Canyon intersects with several smaller canyons has a high degree of topographical screening. The southern end of Calf Creek supports dense shrub vegetation which provides further screening. These factors both contribute to make an outstanding opportunity for visitors to seek out and enjoy solitude.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The unit provides opportunities for hiking, horseback riding, photography, nature study, bird hunting, and cross country skiing. None of these opportunities are considered outstanding, nor is there an outstanding opportunity for a variety of recreational experiences.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains golden eagle and prairie falcon nesting sites, sage grouse strutting grounds, and several archaeological sites.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Public comment opposed the proposed decision not to identify a study area, with no supporting details given.

Other comments stated the unit lacked naturalness, due to imprints of man.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

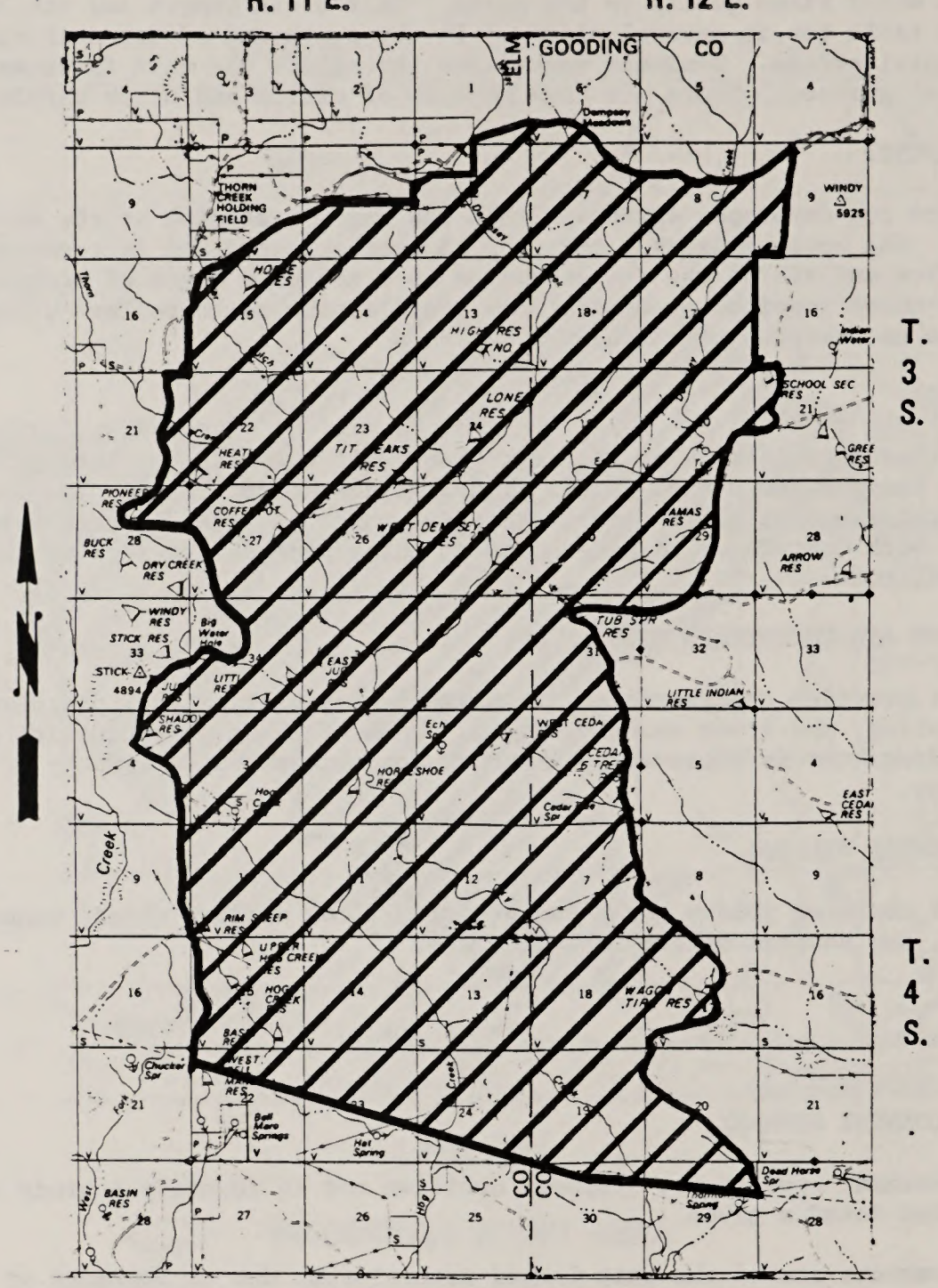
The proposed decision contained the same conclusion as public comments in reference to naturalness.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, and to a lack of outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation.

54—12
DEMPSEY CREEK



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

54-12 DEMPSEY CREEK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 23,644 acres of BLM land with 760 acres of State land inholdings. This figure differs from the 22,996 acres shown in the August, 1979, report due to a more accurate calculation of acreage. The unit is located eight miles northeast of King Hill on the south side of the Bennett Hills. The major portion of the unit is a stepped prairie which rises gently to the north. Several intermittent stream drainages dissect the prairie bench. Dry Creek Canyon becomes a dominant feature of the landscape in the south portion of the unit. Dominant vegetation throughout the unit is sagebrush and annual and perennial grasses. There are some juniper in Dry Creek Canyon and a few clumps of aspen on hills and gulleys at the north end of the unit.

NATURALNESS:

The unit contains ten routes with obvious mechanical construction, 28 reservoirs, one large seeding, an old homestead and two mechanical disturbances all of which are substantially noticeable impacts on the naturalness of the unit. Because of these impacts, which are distributed throughout, the unit fails to meet the naturalness criteria.

SOLITUDE:

The unit has topography which is broken by rolling hills and gulleys in the north and several canyons and basalt bluffs in the south. This uneven topography provides excellent topographic screening in some locations. Dry Creek Canyon has juniper and some willow and the north end of the unit has some aspen stands. This provides limited vegetative screening. The combination of topographical screening supplemented with vegetative screening gives an outstanding opportunity for solitude in parts of the unit.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The unit contains opportunities for hiking, horseback riding, photography, cross country skiing and nature study. None of these opportunities are considered outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains several archaeological sites and golden eagle nesting sites.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Public comment that opposed the proposed decision not to identify a study area stated the following:

- Excellent topographic screening within the unit provides outstanding opportunities for solitude.
- The unit has several outstanding supplemental values.

Other comments stated the unit lacked naturalness, due to imprints of man.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

The proposed decision recognized the existance of outstanding opportunities for solitude within the unit. Topographic screening found in the unit was taken into account in making the determination on solitude. The unit was not proposed as a study area because of numerous imprints of man found within the unit which cause the unit not to meet the naturalness criteria.

The supplemental values were already noted in the proposed decision; they cannot be used to qualify a unit as a study area if other characteristics are lacking.

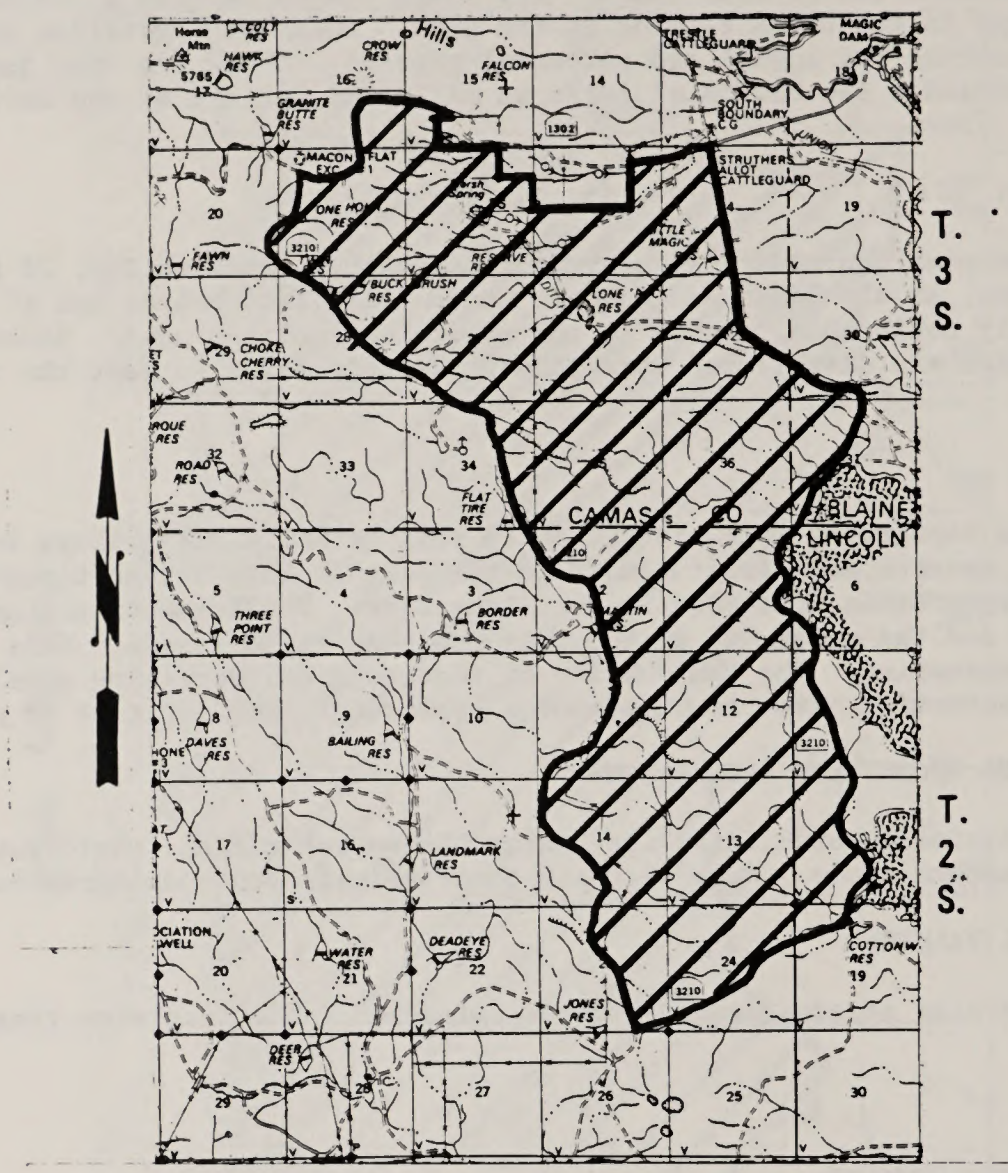
* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, and to a lack of outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation.

54–13
FORGOTTEN HILLS

R. 17 E.



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

54-13 FORGOTTEN HILLS

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 9,420 acres of BLM land with a 640 acre State land inholding. This figure differs from the 9,415 acres shown in the August, 1979, report due to a more accurate calculation of acreage. The unit lies three miles west of Highway 75 near the Shoshone Ice Caves. The unit is composed of several hills and bluffs which are the far east end of the Bennett Hills. Black Butte and its surrounding lava beds are just to the east of the unit. The main vegetation throughout the unit is sagebrush and annual and perennial grasses. There are a few small patches of aspen on the north facing slopes and chokecherry scattered throughout.

NATURALNESS:

An access route which meets the road definition splits the unit into two parcels. The southern parcel is smaller than 5,000 acres and does not meet the size criteria. The northern parcel contains several access routes, reservoirs, and fences distributed throughout. These imprints of man, many of which are substantial, are so obvious that the unit fails to meet the naturalness criteria.

SOLITUDE:

The unit contains several rolling hills, bluffs, and gullies which all contribute to topographic screening. There is very little vegetative screening within the unit. Because the unit is narrow and open hillsides allow high visibility, the unit is not considered to offer outstanding opportunities to enjoy solitude.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreational opportunities for hiking, horseback riding, photography, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, and nature study exist within the unit. None of these are considered outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains sage grouse strutting grounds.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

The only public comment received that specifically addresses the unit indicated a lack of naturalness, due to imprints of man.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

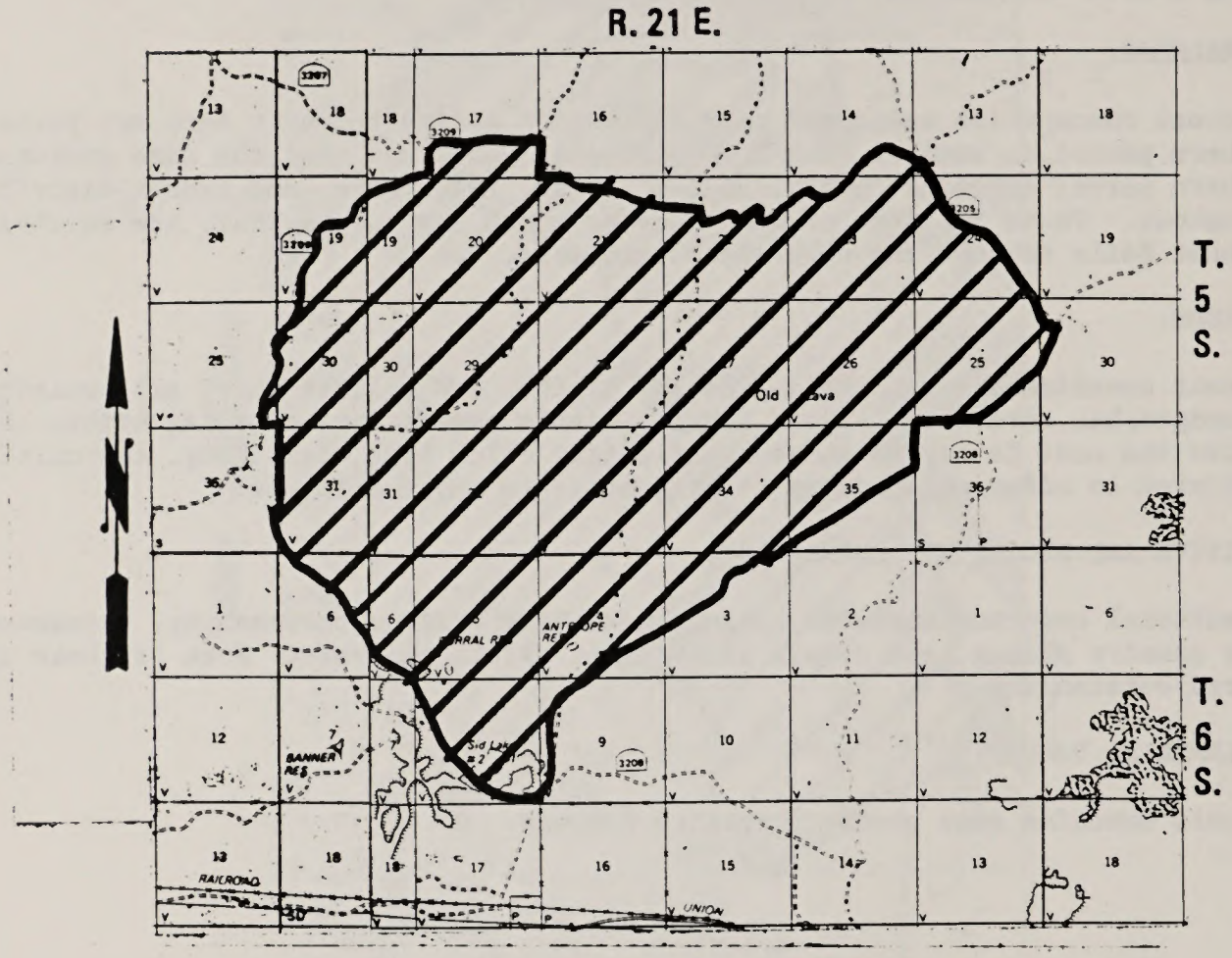
The proposed decision contained the same conclusion as public comments in reference to naturalness.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, and to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

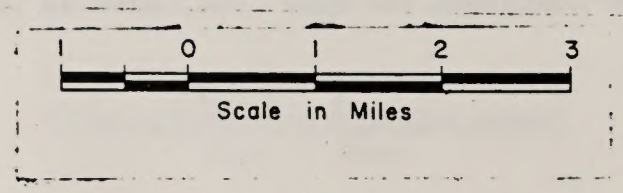
57–3
ANTELOPE



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS



57-3 ANTELOPE

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 12,271 acres of BLM land. The unit is located ten miles southeast of Richfield, on relatively flat grassland terrain. Topographical relief increases in the interior and northern portions of the unit where weathered lava formations are found. Dominant vegetation throughout the unit is annual and perennial grasses. There is some sagebrush scattered throughout the unit with the highest concentrations found in the northern portions.

NATURALNESS:

The unit is divided into four smaller parcels by three access routes. One of these routes meets the road definition, while the other two are substantial imprints on naturalness causing acreage to be deleted from the unit. The remaining parcels are smaller than 5,000 acres, and do not meet the size criteria.

SOLITUDE:

The unit lies on a relatively flat open prairie with very little topographic relief to provide screening. There is a limited amount of vegetative screening provided by scattered sagebrush. The lack of good topographical and vegetative screening does not allow for an outstanding opportunity for solitude.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Opportunities for hiking, horseback riding, nature study, and photography exist within the unit. None of these opportunities are considered outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains good examples of geologic formations associated with lava flows, and sage grouse strutting grounds.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that opposed the proposed decision not to identify a study area are summarized as follows:

- Unit should be reviewed as a cluster (with six adjacent units).
- Access routes which do not meet the road criteria should not be used to divide the unit into parcels which do not meet the size criteria.
- Lack of vegetative and topographic screening in the unit does not diminish outstanding opportunities for solitude.
- The unit offers outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation.

Comments that agreed with dropping the unit noted a lack of naturalness due to imprints of man.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

Three access routes extend through the unit and divide it into four parcels, each of which contain less than 5,000 acres and, therefore, do not meet the size criteria. One of these routes meets the road criteria. Two other access routes appear to have been constructed as firebreaks. These routes show clear evidence of having been mechanically constructed. Rehabilitation through the use of hand tools or natural processes is not feasible given the length of the routes.

Clustering of units which are separated by roads, in order to consider them as one unit, is not provided for in any of the Bureau of Land Management policy for conducting wilderness inventory. Each unit must be assessed on its own.

Solitude:

It is generally recognized that the lack of topography and tall vegetation limits the opportunity to achieve solitude unless the area is large. Low vegetation on flat terrain can provide excellent screening if the area is large enough to allow other visitors or external influences to blend or disappear into the landscape. This unit, split into four parcels, is not large enough to allow a number of user groups or external influences to blend into the landscape.

Primitive Recreation:

The opportunity to achieve a primitive recreation experience is dependent upon a unit's size and ability to provide exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions. Exceptional natural features are those which provide exceptional scenery, diversity of landform and/or mobility of travel for a visitor, and would result in a strong recreation attraction to an area for one or more types of activities.

This unit has neither the size nor the exceptional or unusual natural features to provide primitive recreation opportunities which could be considered outstanding.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, and to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

57-4 BLACK RIDGE CRATER

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 8,138 acres of BLM land. The unit lies eight miles east of Richfield, on relatively flat prairie terrain. The flat terrain is broken in places by volcanic rock formations among which Black Ridge Crater is the most prominent. Black Ridge Caves lie to the north of the crater and are composed of several lava tubes of varying length and size. The main vegetation throughout the unit is sagebrush and annual and perennial grasses.

NATURALNESS:

Three access routes, which meet the road definition, cross the unit from north to south. These roads divide the unit into smaller parcels, none of which meets the size criteria.

SOLITUDE:

Although Black Ridge Crater and the surrounding lava landscape provide some topographical relief, overall topographical screening in the unit is minimal. Some of the taller sagebrush provide limited vegetational screening. There is no area in the unit where topographic and vegetative screening combine to offer what is considered an outstanding opportunity for visitors to enjoy solitude.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The unit offers opportunities for hiking, horseback riding, nature study and cave exploration. None of these opportunities are considered outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains opportunities for scientific study of geologic land forms and processes associated with fissure lava flows, and sage grouse strutting grounds.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that opposed the proposed decision not to identify a study area are summarized as follows:

- The unit should be reviewed as a cluster (with six adjacent units).
- Access routes which do not meet road criteria should not be used to divide the unit into parcels too small to meet the size criteria.
- Lack of vegetative and topographic screening in the unit does not diminish outstanding opportunities for solitude.
- The unit offers outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation.

Comments that agreed with dropping the unit noted a lack of naturalness due to imprints of man.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

Clustering of units which are separated by roads, in order to consider them as one unit, is not provided for in any of the Bureau of Land Management policy for conducting wilderness inventory. Each unit must be assessed on its own.

Three access routes within the unit meet the road criteria and divide the unit into parcels of less than 5,000 acres. None of these parcels meet the size criteria.

Solitude:

It is generally recognized that the lack of topography and tall vegetation limits the opportunity to achieve solitude unless the area is large. Low

vegetation on flat terrain can provide excellent screening if the area is large enough to allow other visitors or external influences to blend or disappear into the landscape. This unit, split into four parcels, is not large enough to allow a number of user groups or external influences to blend into the landscape.

Primitive Recreation:

The opportunity to achieve a primitive recreation experience is dependent upon a unit's size and ability to provide exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions. Exceptional natural features are those which provide exceptional scenery, diversity of landform and/or mobility of travel for a visitor, and would result in a strong recreation attraction to an area for one or more types of activities.

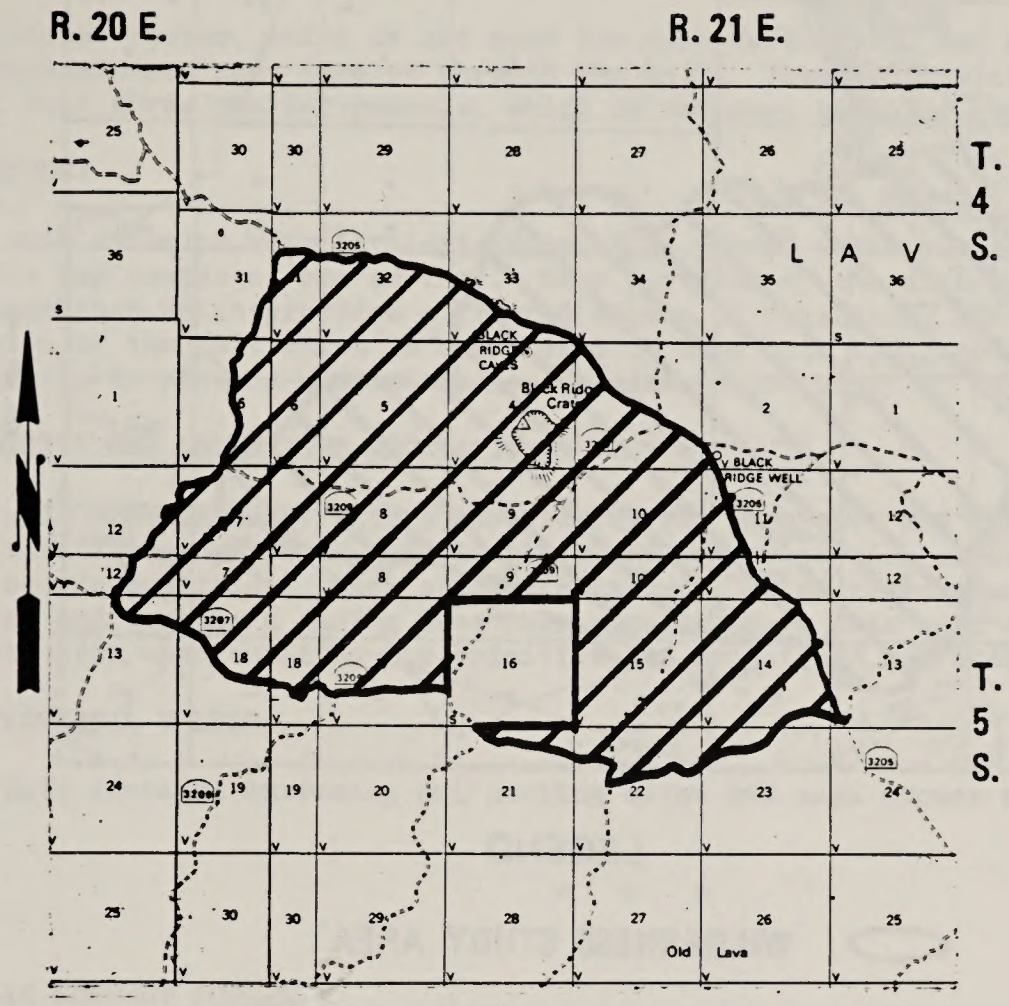
This unit has neither the size nor the exceptional or unusual natural features to provide primitive recreation opportunities which could be considered outstanding.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, and to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

57–4
BLACK RIDGE CRATER



LEGEND

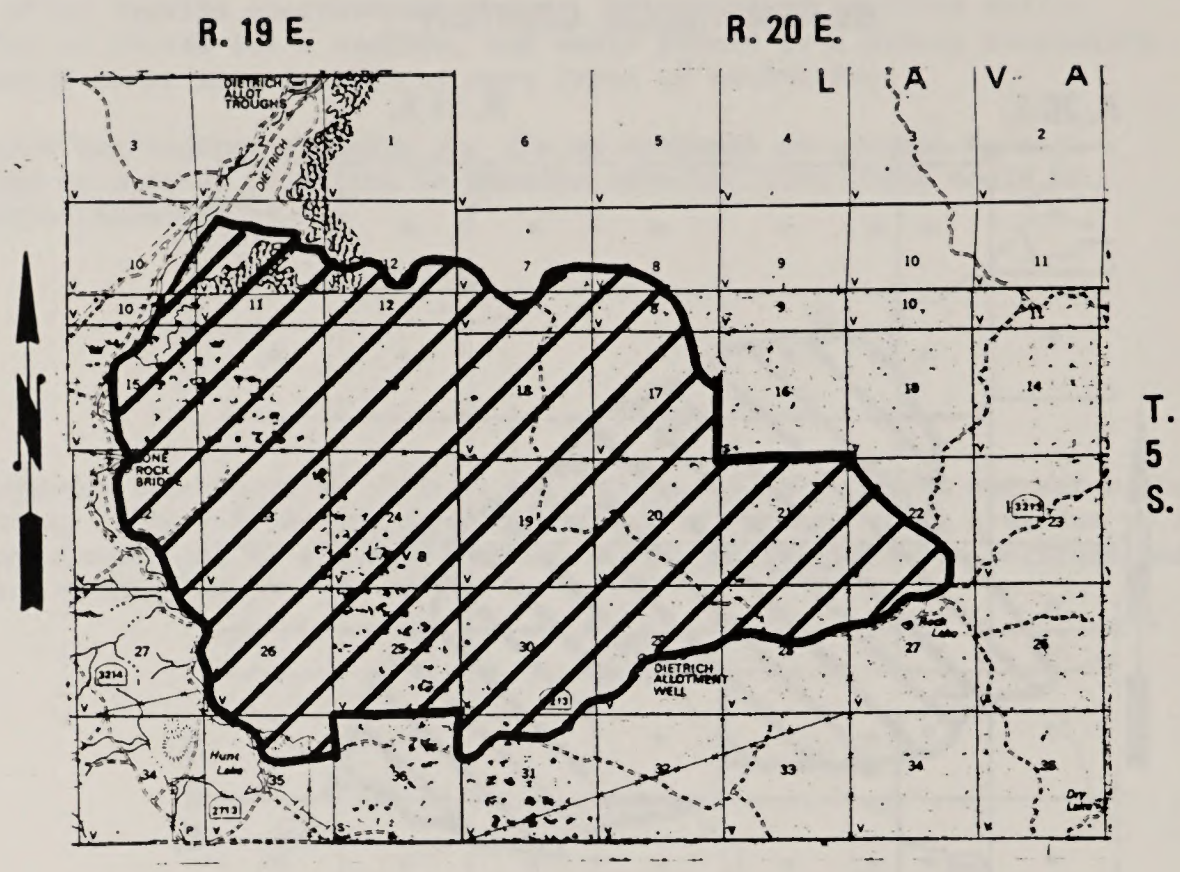
WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

57–5
LONE ROCK



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

57-5 LONE ROCK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 10,934 acres of BLM land. The unit lies five miles south of Richfield, on a flat expanse of weathered lava. Rock outcrops add occasional variety to the terrain but topographical relief is minimal. Dominant vegetation throughout the unit is sagebrush and annual and perennial grasses. Some small shrubs are found in shaded areas of the lava formations.

NATURALNESS:

Two access routes, which do not meet the road definition, but are substantial imprints on naturalness, pass into or through the unit. These routes effectively split the unit into three smaller parcels, which do not meet the size criteria.

SOLITUDE:

The unit contains very little topographical relief which can screen visitors from the sights and sounds of one another. Some portions of the unit contain a large subspecies of sagebrush which provides a limited degree of vegetative screening. There is no portion of the unit which is considered to have both topographical and vegetative screening to provide visitors an outstanding opportunity to enjoy solitude.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The unit provides very little opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation. The flat topography with very little vegetative variation creates a dull landscape with few scenic qualities. Lack of scenic features makes recreation opportunities such as hiking and horseback riding less than outstanding. This unit is not considered to have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains burrowing owl nesting sites and sage grouse strutting grounds.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that favored identification as a study area are summarized as follows:

- The unit should be reviewed as a cluster (with six adjacent units).
- Access routes which do not meet the road criteria should not be used to divide the unit into parcels which do not meet the size criteria.
- Lack of vegetative and topographic screening does not diminish outstanding opportunities for solitude in the unit.
- The unit offers outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation.

Comments that agreed with dropping the unit noted a lack of naturalness due to imprints of man.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

Clustering of units which are separated by roads, in order to consider them as one unit, is not provided for in any of the Bureau of Land Management policy for conducting wilderness inventory. Each unit must be assessed on its own.

One access route that does not meet the road criteria, shows evidence of heavy use and has deep ruts along much if its length. This route is a clear imprint on the naturalness of the unit. In order to exclude it from the unit, the unit must be divided by the route. Two other access routes, one a mechanically constructed route for which rehabilitation is not feasible, must be excluded. The exclusion of these access routes splits the unit into parcels which do not meet size criteria.

Solitude:

It is generally recognized that the lack of topography and tall vegetation limits the opportunity to achieve solitude unless the area is large. Low vegetation on flat terrain can provide excellent screening if the area is large enough to allow other visitors or external influences to blend or disappear into the landscape. This unit, split into three parcels, is not large enough to allow a number of user groups or external influences to blend into the landscape.

Primitive Recreation:

The opportunity to achieve a primitive recreation experience is dependent upon the unit's size and ability to provide exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions. Exceptional natural features are those which provide exceptional scenery, diversity of landform and/or mobility of travel for a visitor, and would result in a strong recreation attraction to an area for one or more types of activities.

This unit has neither the size nor the exceptional or unusual natural features to provide primitive recreation opportunities which could be considered outstanding.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, and to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 21,544 acres of BLM land with a 640 acre State land inholding. Old weathered lava covers the unit. There is very little relief with the plain covered with sagebrush and grasses.

NATURALNESS:

Three access routes along the east side of the unit are substantially noticeable imprints on naturalness. The boundary should be changed to delete acreage in the vicinity of these access routes. This boundary change also results in the cherrystemming of an access route which extends into the portion of the unit which meets the naturalness criteria. Another access route has caused the deletion of a parcel of land on the west side of the unit. All major imprints of man on the naturalness of the unit have been deleted.

SOLITUDE:

The unit contains very little topographical relief which can screen visitors from the sights and sounds of others. Some portions of the unit contain a large subspecies of sagebrush which provides a limited degree of vegetative screening. No portion of the unit is judged to contain adequate topographical and vegetative screening to provide visitors an outstanding opportunity to enjoy solitude.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The unit provides little opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation. The flat topography with little vegetative variation creates a dull landscape with few scenic qualities. Lack of scenic features makes recreation opportunities such as hiking and horseback riding less than outstanding. The unit is judged to not offer outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Rock monuments are found in the unit, which may have archaeological or historical significance.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments in favor of study area identification are summarized as follows:

- The unit should be reviewed as a cluster (with six adjacent units).
- Access routes which do not meet the road criteria should not be used to divide the unit into parcels which do not meet the size criteria.
- Lack of vegetative and topographic screening does not diminish outstanding opportunities for solitude in the unit.
- The unit offers outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation.

Comments that agreed with dropping the unit noted a lack of naturalness due to imprints of man.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

Clustering of units which are separated by roads, in order to consider them as one unit, is not provided for in any of the Bureau of Land Management policy for conducting wilderness inventory. Each unit must be assessed on its own.

Two access routes are noticeable imprints of man on the naturalness of the unit. Rehabilitation of these routes through the use of hand tools is not feasible given the length of the routes. Another access route does meet the road criteria. All three routes have been excluded from the unit. To do this some small parcels have been cut off from the main portion of the unit and excluded with the access routes. As mentioned in the proposed decision, the remaining portion of the unit meets the size and naturalness criteria.

Solitude:

It is generally recognized that the lack of topography and tall vegetation limits the opportunity to achieve solitude unless the area is large. Low vegetation on flat terrain can provide excellent screening if the area is large enough to allow other visitors or external influences to blend or disappear into the landscape. This unit is not large enough to allow a number of user groups or external influences to blend into the landscape.

Primitive Recreation:

The opportunity to achieve a primitive recreation experience is dependent upon the unit's size and ability to provide exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions. Exceptional natural features are those which provide exceptional scenery, diversity of landform and/or mobility of travel for a visitor, and would result in a strong recreation attraction to an area for one or more types of activities.

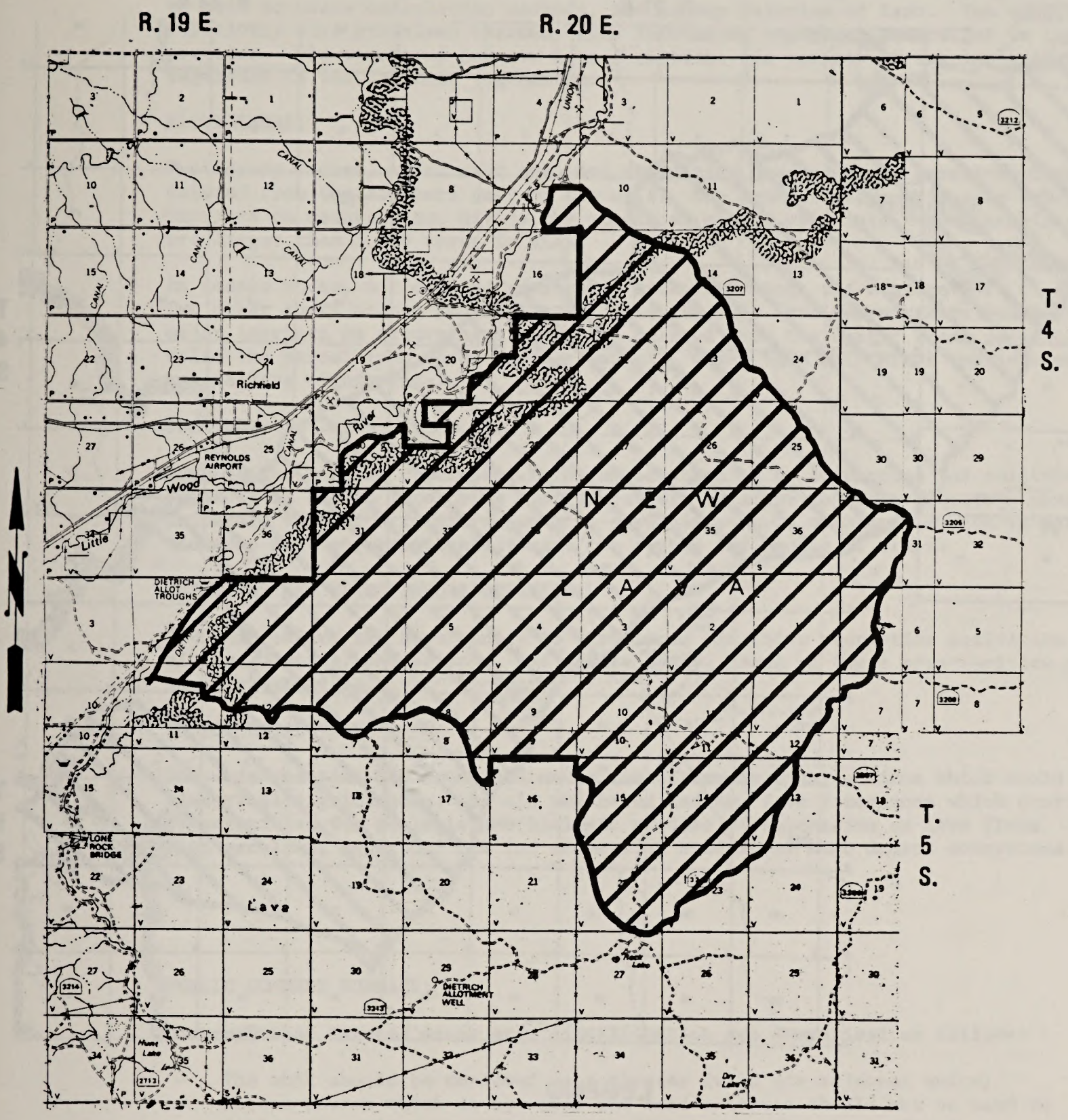
This unit has neither the size nor the exceptional or unusual natural features to provide primitive recreation opportunities which could be considered outstanding.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

57–6
WILDHORSE



LEGEND

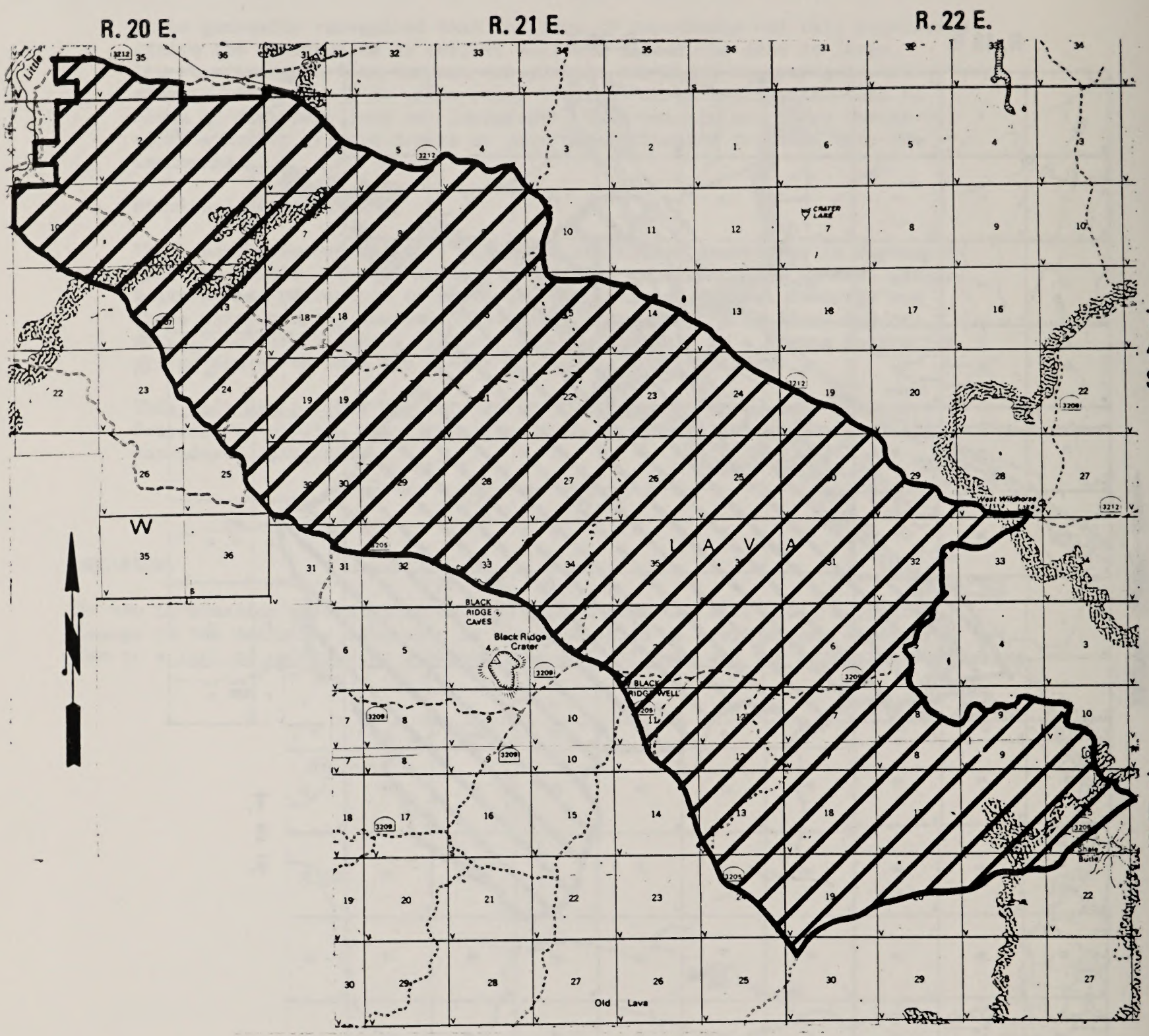
WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

57–7
PAGARI



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 33,116 acres of BLM land, with State land inholdings of 1,280 acres. This figure differs from the 39,169 acres shown in the August, 1979, report, due solely to more accurate calculation methods, not to any deletion of land. The unit is relatively flat grassland terrain, with increasing topographical relief in interior portions. Old weathered and new lava formations add variety to the landscape. Sagebrush is the dominant vegetation.

NATURALNESS:

Two access routes, which meet the road definition have caused a parcel of land to be deleted from the southern part of the unit. Two other routes, which are substantial imprints on naturalness, divide the remainder of the unit into three parcels which are larger than 5,000 acres in size.

An access route, not considered a road, extends through the western part of the unit. Two other short access routes, extend into the unit from the northern boundary. All major imprints on naturalness have been deleted from the unit. These deletions have split the parcel into three smaller parcels, which have only minor imprints on naturalness within them.

SOLITUDE:

None of the unit is considered to offer outstanding opportunities for solitude. Since the unit is broken into three smaller parcels by major imprints on naturalness, and it is uniformly flat with little vegetative screening, it is not large enough to provide visitors much opportunity to escape the sights and sounds of others.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The unit offers the opportunity to experience primitive recreation activities such as hiking, camping, photography, and nature study. None of these opportunities are judged to be outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains burrowing owl nests (sensitive species), cairns which could have historical significance, and old weathered and new lava formations which provide opportunities for geologic and biologic studies of succession on lava flows. There are also excellent opportunities for ecological studies of high desert ecosystems.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that favored study area identification are summarized as follows:

- The unit should be reviewed as a cluster (with six adjacent units).
- Access routes which do not meet the road criteria should not be used to divide the unit into parcels which do not meet the size criteria.
- Lack of vegetative and topographic screening does not diminish outstanding opportunities for solitude in the unit.
- The unit offers outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation.

Comments that agreed with dropping the unit noted a lack of naturalness, due to imprints of man.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

Clustering of units which are separated by roads in order to consider them as one unit is not provided for in any of the Bureau of Land Management policy for conducting wilderness inventory. Each unit must be assessed on its own.

Three access routes pass through or extend into the unit. All of these routes meet the road criteria. In order to exclude these routes from the unit two small parcels of land have also been excluded.

Another access route extends for five miles through the unit. It was mechanically constructed as a firebreak but does not meet the road criteria. As a noticeable imprint on the naturalness of the unit, however, this route must be excluded from the unit.

The exclusion of two of the access routes divide the unit into three parcels. As mentioned in the proposed action these parcels do meet the size criteria. Except for the exclusion of some parcels in the western portion of the unit, due to imprints of man on naturalness, these parcels also meet the naturalness criteria.

Solitude:

It is generally recognized that the lack of topography and tall vegetation limits the opportunity to achieve solitude unless the area is large. Low vegetation on flat terrain can provide excellent screening if the area is large enough to allow other visitors or external influences to blend or disappear into the landscape. This unit, split into three parcels, is not large enough to allow a number of user groups or external influences to blend into the landscape.

Primitive Recreation:

The opportunity to achieve a primitive recreation experience is dependent upon the unit's size and ability to provide exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions. Exceptional natural features are those which provide exceptional scenery, diversity of landform and/or mobility of travel for a visitor, and would result in a strong recreation attraction to an area for one or more types of activities.

This unit has neither the size nor the exceptional or unusual natural features to provide primitive recreation opportunities which could be considered outstanding.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

57-12 LAIDLAW BUTTE

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 9,868 acres of BLM land, with 640 acres of State land inholdings. The unit is dominated by Laidlaw Butte, elevation 5,355 feet. Desert grasslands rise gently upslope to this prominent landmark. Vegetation is primarily sagebrush, rabbitbrush, and grasses.

NATURALNESS:

Two access routes which can be defined as roads divide the unit into three parcels, none of which are over 5,000 acres. Therefore the parcels do not meet the size criteria.

SOLITUDE:

Outstanding opportunities for solitude are judged not to exist in the unit. Minimal vegetative and topographical screening make it difficult to find seclusion from others.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation exist within the unit, including hiking, camping, photography, nature study, hunting and horseback riding. None of these opportunities are judged to be outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Pronghorn antelope, coyotes, and other species of wildlife are found in the unit. Laidlaw Butte offers scenic and geological values.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that opposed the proposed decision not to identify the unit as a study area are summarized as follows:

- The unit offers a natural area with solitude, wildlife, and recreation values.
- The unit has often been used to observe wildlife, primarily grouse in early spring.

Comments that agreed with dropping the unit noted a lack of naturalness, due to imprints of man.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

The unit is split into three small parcels by access routes which meet the road criteria. None of the parcels meet the size criteria. All of the parcels also contain range developments, primarily water reservoirs, which are major imprints of man on the naturalness of the unit. These imprints are highly visible from most portions of the unit because of the gentle slope of the land as it rises toward Laidlaw Butte. In Laidlaw Butte Crater another reservoir has been constructed and is plainly visible from the rim and the crater. Because these imprints of man are visible throughout the unit, it has been determined that the unit does not meet the naturalness criteria.

Solitude:

The gentle open slope of Laidlaw Butte, which occupies a central position in this unit, makes the entire unit, except for the crater, highly visible to anyone standing on the upper or lower portion of the slope. The crater area is too small and open to provide more than one group of users any solitude. For these reasons the opportunities for solitude in this unit are considered to be less than outstanding.

Primitive Recreation:

The opportunity to achieve a primitive recreation experience is dependent upon the unit's size and ability to provide exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions. Exceptional natural features are those which provide exceptional scenery, diversity of landform and/or mobility of travel for a visitor, and would result in a strong recreation attraction to an area for one or more types of activities.

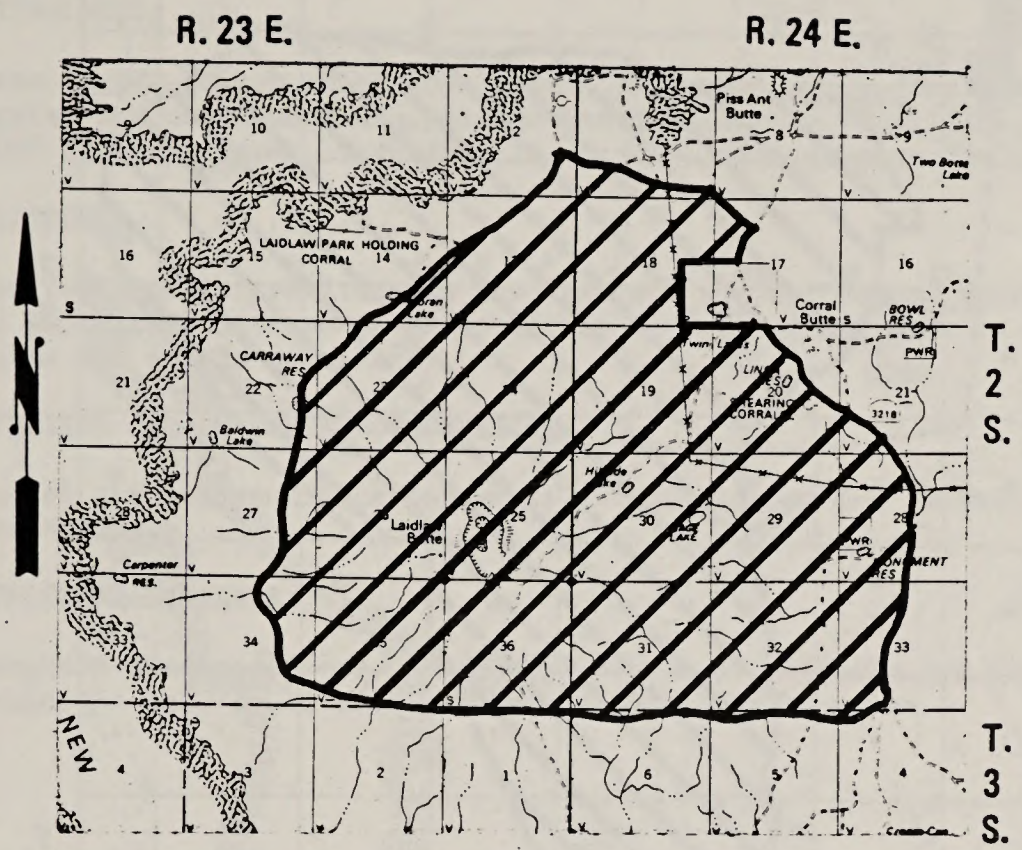
This unit has neither the size nor the exceptional or unusual natural features to provide primitive recreation opportunities which could be considered outstanding.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, and a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

57–12
LAIDLAW BUTTE



LEGEND

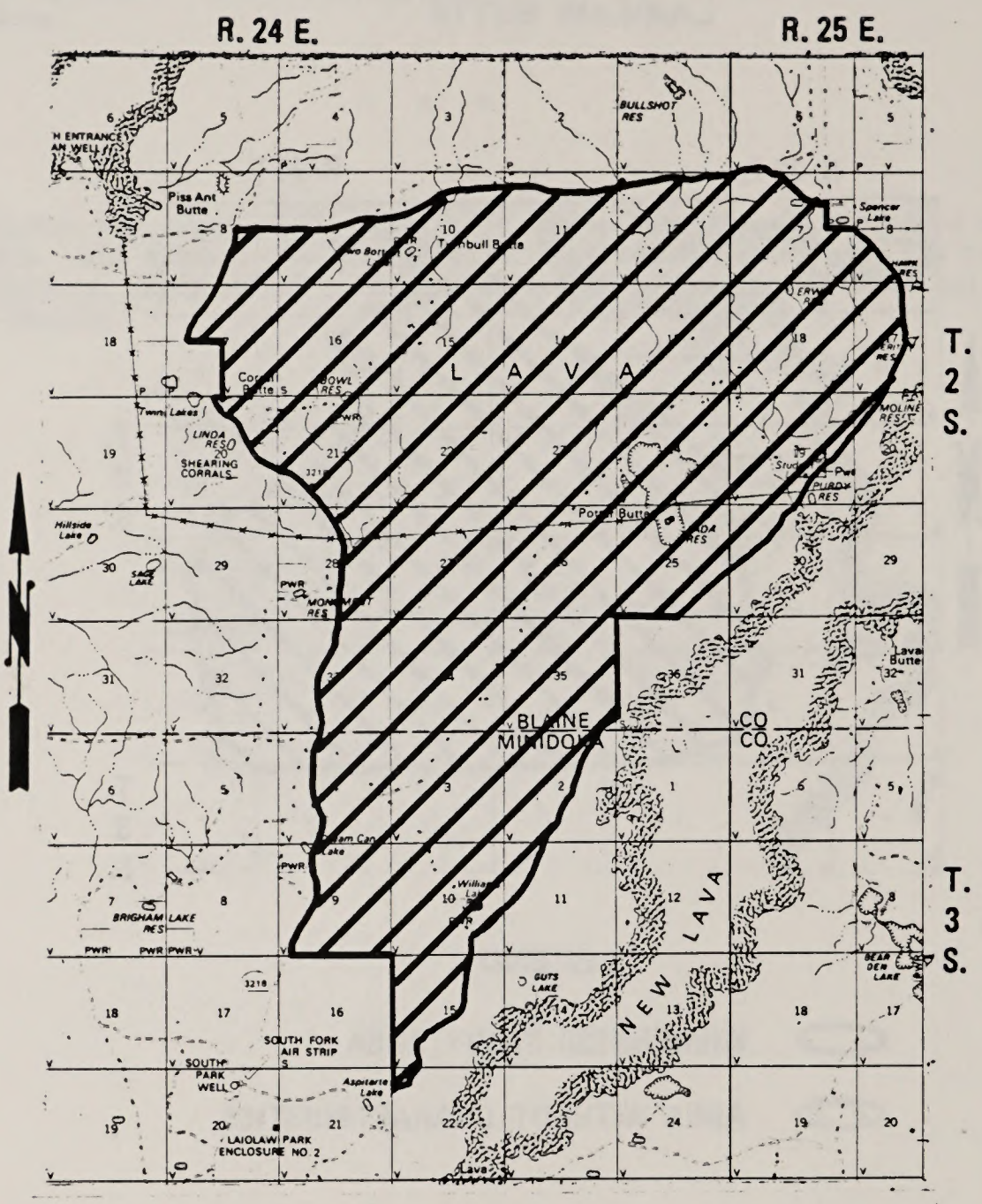
WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

57–13
POTTER BUTTE



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

57-13 POTTER BUTTE

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 16,180 acres of BLM land, with 640 acres of State land inholdings. This acreage differs from the 13,432 acres shown in the August, 1979, report due solely to a more accurate calculation of acreage. The unit is characterized by rolling desert terrain. Sagebrush is the dominant vegetation in the northern portion of the unit, with increasing amounts of rabbitbrush and annual and perennial grasses in southern portions. Turnbull Butte (5,262 feet), Corral Butte (5,052 feet), and Potter Butte (5,032 feet) are prominent features.

NATURALNESS:

Three access routes which have been constructed and/or are maintained to insure relatively regular and continuous use, divide the unit into five parcels, none of which are over 5,000 acres in size. Therefore the parcels fail to meet the size criteria.

SOLITUDE:

Opportunities for solitude in the unit are not considered outstanding. Minimal vegetative and topographic screening and numerous impacts of man make it difficult to escape the sights and sounds of others.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

None of the opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are judged to be outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Pronghorn antelope, deer, and other species of wildlife are found within the unit. Cairns within the unit could possibly have archaeological value.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that opposed the proposed decision not to identify the unit as a study area are summarized as follows:

- The unit offers natural areas with solitude, wildife, and recreation values.
- The unit has been used regularly for recreation, primarily the observation of wildlife in early spring.

Comments that agreed with dropping the unit noted a lack of naturalness, due to imprints of man.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

The unit is broken into several small parcels by access routes which meet the road criteria. None of the parcels has 5,000 acres which meet the naturalness criteria.

Solitude:

It is generally recognized that the lack of topography and tall vegetation limits the opportunity to achieve solitude unless the area is large. Low vegetation on flat terrain can provide excellent screening if the area is large enough to allow other visitors or external influences to blend or disappear into the landscape. This unit, split into five parcels, is not large enough to allow a number of user groups or external influences to blend into the landscape.

Primitive Recreation:

The opportunity to achieve a primitive recreation experience is dependent upon the unit's size and ability to provide exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions. Exceptional natural features are those which provide exceptional scenery, diversity of landform and/or mobility of travel for a visitor, and would result in a strong recreation attraction to an area for one or more types of activities.

This unit has neither the size nor the exceptional or unusual natural features to provide primitive recreation opportunities which could be considered outstanding.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, and a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 7,398 acres of BLM land, with 640 acres of State land inholdings. The unit lies in the southeast portion of Laidlaw Park, between two fingers of the Craters of the Moon Lava Flow. The flat terrain is dominated in the western and southern portions of the unit by annual and perennial grasses. Sagebrush and rabbitbrush increase in frequency to the north and east. Minimal topographical relief occurs in locations where lava rock outcrops add some diversity to the landscape.

NATURALNESS:

An access route goes through the unit from the north boundary to the west boundary. Another access route extends a short distance into the unit from the west boundary. Neither route is a substantially noticeable imprint of man. Four reservoirs have been mechanically constructed and have an impact on apparent naturalness of the unit.

SOLITUDE:

The unit has been judged not to contain outstanding opportunities for solitude. Screening due to vegetation and topography is minimal. The small size of the unit combined with the generally poor screening renders opportunities for solitude less than outstanding.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Although the unit contains opportunities for recreational activities of a primitive and unconfined nature, these opportunities have been judged not to be outstanding. The small size of the unit plus the lack of interesting land form has constraining effects on the primitive and unconfined recreational opportunities.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Wildlife species observed in the unit include golden eagle and burrowing owl (threatened species). Several herds of antelope were observed in the unit.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that opposed the proposed decision not to identify the unit as a study area are summarized as follows:

- The unit should be reviewed as a cluster (with six adjacent units).
- Access routes which do not meet road criteria should not be used to divide the unit into parcels which do not meet the size criteria.
- Lack of vegetative and topographic screening does not diminish outstanding opportunities for solitude in the unit.
- The unit offers outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation.

Comments that agreed with dropping the unit noted a lack of naturalness, due to imprints of man.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

Clustering of units which are separated by roads in order to consider them as one unit is not provided for in any of the Bureau of Land Management policy for conducting wilderness inventory. Each unit must be assessed on its own.

No roads have been identified in the unit. The proposed decision stated that the unit meets the naturalness criteria; with four reservoirs being the only other imprints of man.

Solitude:

It is generally recognized that the lack of topography and tall vegetation limits the opportunity to achieve solitude unless the area is large. Low vegetation on flat terrain can provide excellent screening if the area is large enough to allow other visitors or external influences to blend or disappear into the landscape. This unit is not large enough to allow a number of user groups or external influences to blend into the landscape.

Primitive Recreation:

The opportunity to achieve a primitive recreation experience is dependent upon the unit's size and ability to provide exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions. Exceptional natural features are those which provide exceptional scenery, diversity of landform and/or mobility of travel for a visitor, and would result in a strong recreation attraction to an area for one or more types of activities.

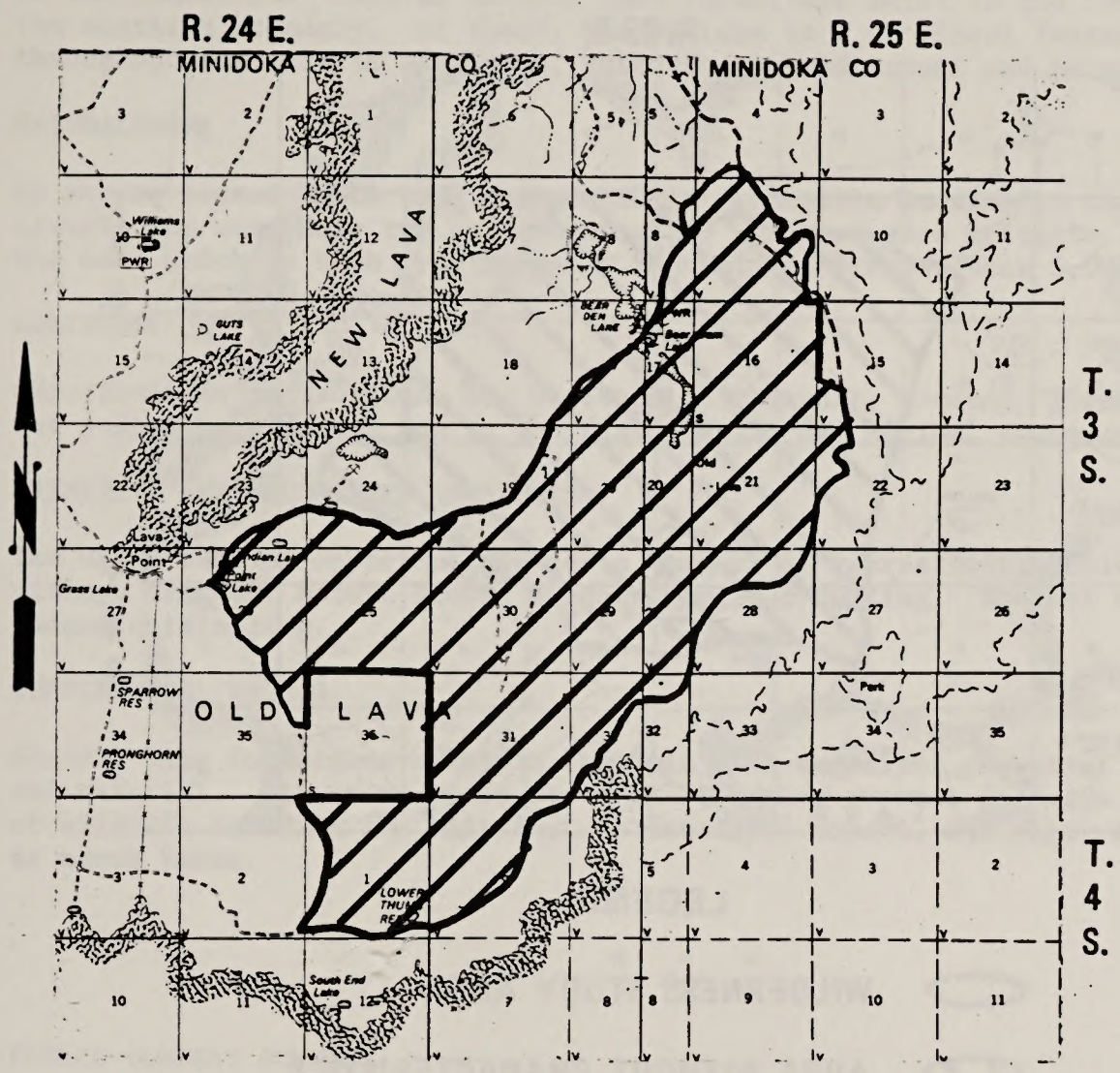
This unit has neither the size nor the exceptional or unusual natural features to provide primitive recreation opportunities which could be considered outstanding.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

57–15
POINT



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5
Scale in Miles

57–16
MacRAE LAKE

R. 23 E.



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

57-16 MACRAE LAKE

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 7,876 acres of BLM land. This figure differs from the 6,386 acres shown in the August, 1979, report due to a more accurate calculation of acreage. In addition 986 acres have been added to the unit when it was determined that a route used as part of the unit boundary does not exist on the ground.

The unit is relatively flat terrain and rough weathered lava. Topographical variability increases in the northwest portion of the unit where numerous rock outcrops add diversity to the landscape. Several natural lake formations exist in the lower elevations along the southern boundary. Of these, MacRae Lake is a prominent feature. Dominant vegetation throughout the unit is sagebrush, rabbitbrush, and annual and perennial grasses.

NATURALNESS:

An access route, which is a substantially noticeable imprint on the naturalness of the unit divides the unit into two parcels which do not meet size criteria. There is no part of the unit which is both free of man's imprint and greater than 5,000 acres in size.

SOLITUDE:

Opportunities for solitude may be found in the unit, however, these opportunities are not judged outstanding due to the flat terrain and minimal topographical variability.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The unit contains opportunities for a variety of recreational activities, including hiking, camping, nature study, photography, and hunting. None of these activities are judged outstanding.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Several lake formations exist in the unit with excellent potential to contain archaeological material. Six known areas serve as strutting grounds for sage grouse. Other species of wildlife found in the unit include antelope, coyote, and raptorial birds, such as marsh hawks.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that opposed the proposed decision not to identify the unit as a study area are summarized as follows:

- The unit should be reviewed as a cluster (with six adjacent units).
- Access routes which do not meet the road criteria should not be used to divide the unit into parcels which do not meet the size criteria.
- Lack of vegetative and topographic screening does not diminish outstanding opportunities for solitude in the unit.
- The unit offers outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation.

Comments that agreed with dropping the unit noted a lack of naturalness, due to imprints of man.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

Clustering of units which are separated by roads in order to consider them as one unit is not provided for in any of the Bureau of Land Management policy for conducting wilderness inventory. Each unit must be assessed on its own.

An access route divides the unit into two parcels which are too small to meet the size criteria. The access route does not meet the road criteria, but it does create a major imprint on the naturalness of the unit. Therefore, it must be excluded.

Solitude:

It is generally recognized that the lack of topography and tall vegetation limits the opportunity to achieve solitude unless the area is large. Low vegetation on flat terrain provides excellent screening if the area is large enough to allow other visitors or external influences to blend or disappear into the landscape. This unit, split into two parcels, is not large enough to allow a number of user groups or external influences to blend into the landscape.

Primitive Recreation:

The opportunity to achieve a primitive recreation experience is dependent upon the unit's size and ability to provide exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions. Exceptional natural features are those which provide exceptional scenery, diversity of landform and/or mobility of travel for a visitor, and would result in a strong recreation attraction to an area for one or more types of activities.

This unit has neither the size nor the exceptional or unusual natural features to provide primitive recreation opportunities which could be considered outstanding.

* * *

DECISION:

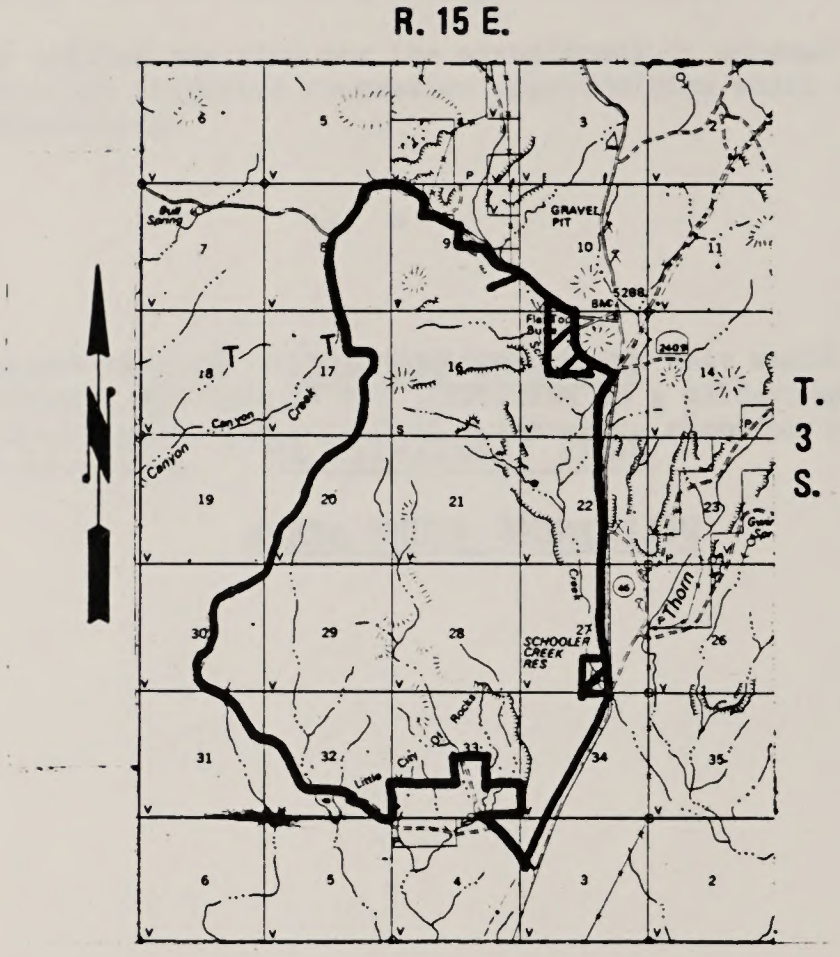
No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness, and a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

SHOSHONE DISTRICT

UNITS IDENTIFIED AS

WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

54–5
LITTLE CITY OF ROCKS



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

54-5 LITTLE CITY OF ROCKS

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 5,970 acres of BLM land with a 640 acre State land inholding. This acreage differs from the 5,665 acres shown in the August, 1979, report due to a more accurate calculation of acreage. The unit is located 13 miles north of Gooding on the south facing side of the Bennett Hills. It lies just west of Highway 46. The major portion of the unit is a gently sloping plain with several rhyolite bluffs. The south-central portion of the unit contains an aggregation of wind and water eroded rhyolite columns which are collectively known as the Little City of Rocks. Dominant vegetation throughout the unit is sagebrush and annual and perennial grasses. Chokecherry and willows are found in some of the more shaded portions of the canyons in the Little City of Rocks. There is one small grove of aspen on a north facing slope in the north end of the unit.

NATURALNESS:

Two access routes, which are not substantial imprints on naturalness, extend a short distance into the unit from the south and east boundaries. A total of 95 acres either impacted by a mechanical disturbance or reserved as material sites should be deleted from the unit.

SOLITUDE:

The rhyolite rock formations in the southern portion of the unit provide excellent topographic screening. The canyon bottoms also have some vegetative screening from several shrub species. The combination of topographic and vegetative screening in the unit provides an outstanding opportunity for solitude. The northern portions also contain good topographic screening, and provide the opportunity to enjoy solitude.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The unit provides primitive recreation opportunities which are considered outstanding. The many rhyolite rock columns provide an ideal setting in which to participate in photography, nature study, and hiking and camping. Opportunities for other activities that are present, but may not be outstanding include hunting, horseback riding, and cross country skiing.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains several archaeological sites; golden eagle, prairie falcon, great horned owl, and red-tailed hawk nesting sites; and unique geological formations of wind and water eroded rhyolite.

REHABILITATION:

Two access routes have some potential for returning to a natural condition if vehicle access were restricted. With the passage of time, vegetation would grow in the routes and make them difficult to distinguish from the surrounding area.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments opposed to identifying the unit as a study area specifically mentioned the following reasons:

- The area is covered with roads; is not natural because of several imprints of man.
- There are no outstanding opportunities for solitude because works of man outside the unit are visible from inside the unit.
- There are no outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation because the area is too crowded; or the unit is hot, dry, and uncomfortable with many rattlesnakes.
- The unit is too small.

Comments supporting a study area specifically mentioned the following reasons:

- There are no roads in the unit which can be considered substantial imprints.
- The unit meets the naturalness criteria.
- The unit provides outstanding opportunities for solitude.
- Many noted that they had experienced outstanding primitive recreation within the unit.
- Several supplemental values were noted.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Size:

The unit contains 5,875 acres of public land. Since the unit exceeds the 5,000-acre requirement, the comment that the unit is too small is not valid.

Roadless/Naturalness:

No supporting information was submitted by those claiming that roads or substantial imprints of man were located within the unit. No new roads or imprints of man were found during additional field checks.

The reference in the proposed decision to rehabilitation was to portions of the unit that meet the naturalness criteria, not to those portions that do not.

Solitude:

Imprints of man outside the unit may be considered during the inventory only in situations where the imprint is adjacent to the unit and its impact so extremely imposing that it cannot be ignored. Imprints of man outside the unit, such as roads, highways, and agricultural activity are not necessarily significant enough to cause their consideration in the inventory of the unit. Highway 46 is well screened from the majority of the unit. Distant vistas of Gooding, Bliss, or other settlements are too far from the unit to be considered in evaluating solitude.

Primitive Recreation:

Present visitor use in the unit is not relevant to evaluating this criterion. The factor to be determined is whether an outstanding opportunity is present regardless of present amount of use. A hot and dry desert environment, replete with rattlesnakes, does not preclude the opportunity to have an outstanding recreation experience if one is prepared to deal with it, in fact, it adds to the physical challenge of the experience. The exceptional scenic beauty of the Little City of Rocks formation and the diversity of landforms within the unit, affords outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 5,875 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

54-6 BLACK CANYON

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 20,960 acres of BLM land with 640 acres of State land inholdings. This figure differs from the 20,480 acres shown in the August, 1979, report due to a more accurate calculation of acreage.

The unit lies on the south-facing side of the Mount Bennett Hills, ten miles north of Gooding. Most of the unit is a flat prairie which rises gently to the north. In the central portion of the unit Black Canyon and East Black Canyon come to within one-third of a mile of each other leaving a narrow strip of the prairie table top between them. The northern half of the unit has a topography composed of rolling hills broken by large and small canyons. The west edge of the unit has unusual rock formations of weathered rhyolite. Dominant vegetation throughout the unit is sagebrush and annual and perennial grasses. There are pockets of willow and other shrubs along some of the intermittent streams.

NATURALNESS:

Several access routes have caused a large parcel in the southern portion to be deleted from the unit. This parcel contains a concentration of imprints on naturalness which are substantially noticeable.

Two access routes from the north boundary extend into the portion of the unit which meets naturalness criteria. Both routes should be excluded from the unit, with the new boundary extending to the edge of the physical impact caused by the roads. An access route, which has been abandoned for several decades and which is not a substantially noticeable imprint on naturalness, extends the length of Black Canyon Creek.

SOLITUDE:

The more northern portions of the unit which are cut by Black Canyon and Burnt Willow Canyon and have rolling hills provide excellent topographic screening. The many rhyolite rock formations provide additional topographic screening. The southern end of the unit has a few small canyons which provide some screening between open expanses of sagebrush prairie. There is little vegetative screening within the unit. The high degree of topographic screening in the unit allows the visitor an outstanding opportunity to enjoy solitude.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The unit contains opportunities for a wide variety of activities, including hiking, nature study, photography, and camping; all considered outstanding. Less outstanding opportunities include hunting, horseback riding, ski touring and snowshoeing.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains several archaeological sites, golden eagle nesting sites, and sage grouse strutting grounds.

REHABILITATION:

An old mechanically constructed trail in Black Canyon is well on the way to returning to a natural condition. The trail is very narrow and overgrown with vegetation to the point it is almost impossible to recognize on the ground. All fences could be completely removed without leaving scars. With the passage of time a brush spray area will become even harder to distinguish.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments opposed to identifying a study area within the unit are summarized as follows:

- The unit is covered with roads.
- There are no outstanding opportunities for solitude in the canyons because they would tend to crowd and confine users.
- There are no outstanding opportunities for solitude in the unit because settlements can be observed from high points in the unit.
- There are no outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation in the unit.

Comments from those supporting the proposed decision are summarized as follows:

- Roads in the unit do not affect solitude or naturalness.
- The unit meets the naturalness criteria.
- The unit has outstanding opportunities for solitude, and for primitive recreation.
- Access routes within the unit will easily return to a natural condition.
- Supplemental values were noted.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

Field checks were made to locate roads which were noted in comments. No new roads were found. No new imprints of man were found in that portion of the unit proposed as a study area. The naturalness is not affected by vistas of settlements outside the boundaries of the unit.

The reference in the proposed decision to rehabilitation was to portions of the unit that meet the naturalness criteria, not to those portions that do not.

Solitude:

Opportunities for solitude are considered outstanding because of topographic screening from Black and Burnt Willow Canyons and numerous rock formations along the western side of the unit. There are more than 14 miles of meandering shallow canyons within the area which one can easily leave in several places to explore the plateaus. Because the unit offers a diversity of interesting landforms and easy entry or exit to the main shallow canyons, the canyons do not create a significant corridor effect. Any corridor effect in the canyon is minimized by the number of miles of canyon available for use.

Primitive Recreation:

Primitive recreation opportunities are considered outstanding because of the unit's unusual natural features and recreation attractions found in a diversity of geological formations.

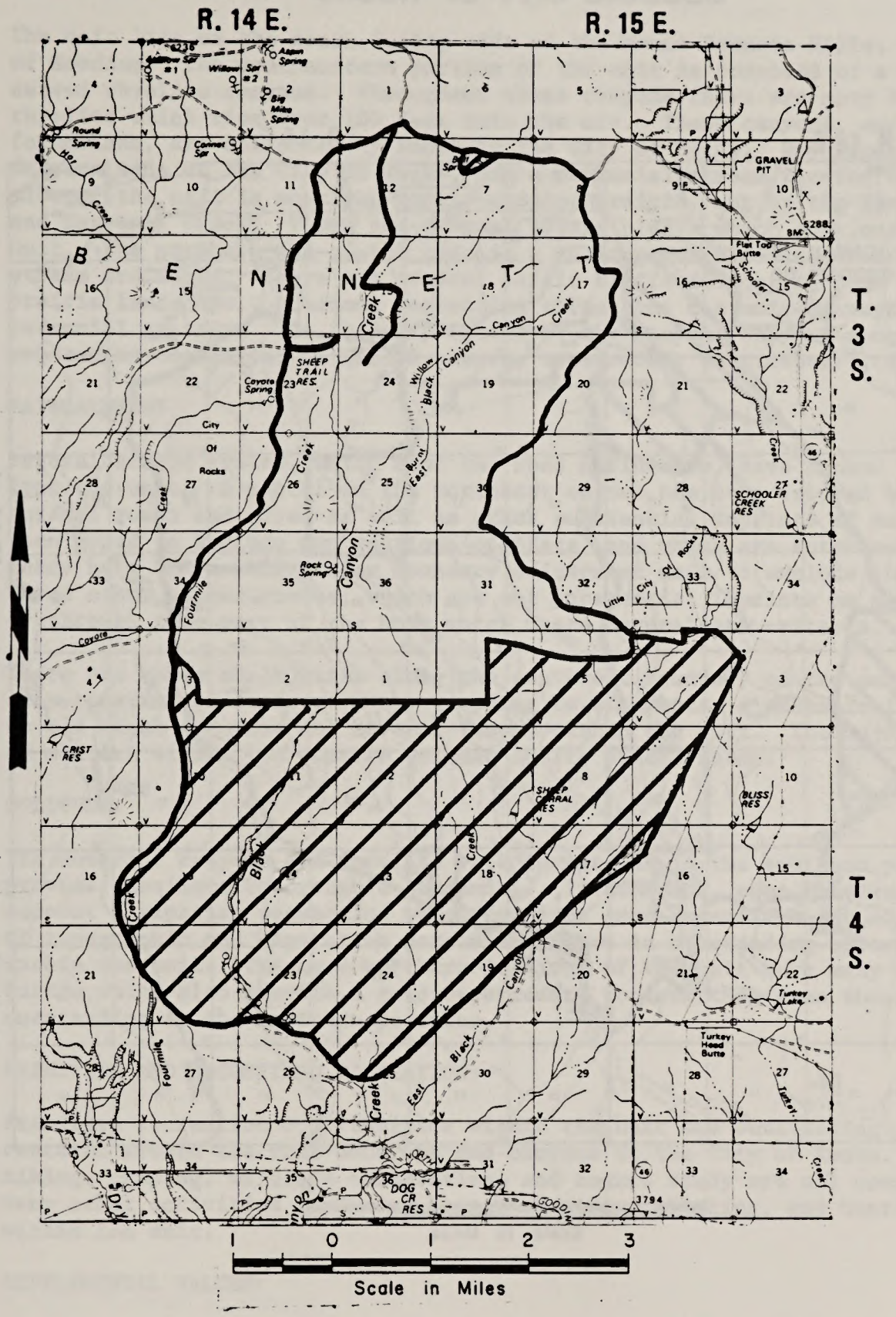
A hot and dry desert environment, replete with rattlesnakes, does not preclude the opportunity to have an outstanding recreation experience if one is prepared to deal with it, in fact, it adds to the physical challenge of the experience.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 10,371 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

54-6
BLACK CANYON



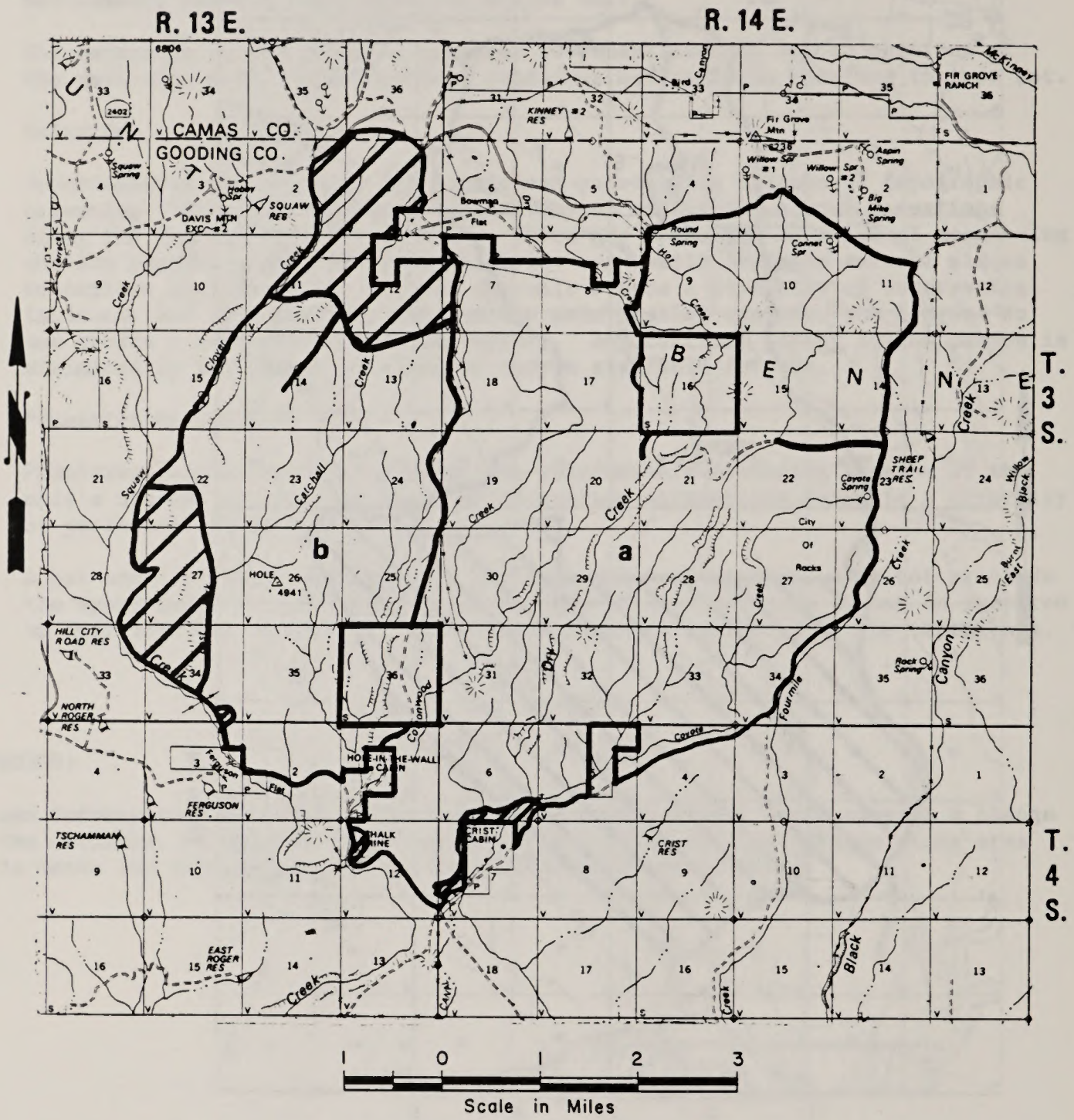
LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

54–8 a,b

GOODING CITY OF ROCKS



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

54-8 GOODING CITY OF ROCKS

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 23,470 acres of BLM land with 1,280 acres of State land inholdings. This figure differs from the 22,685 acres shown in the August, 1979, report due to a more accurate calculation of acreage.

The unit lies on the south facing side of the Mount Bennett Hills, 14 miles northwest of Gooding. The southeastern portion of the unit is composed of a series of deeply carved rhyolite canyons. Throughout these canyons there are many large columns of rhyolite which rise over 100 feet into the air. These canyons, and their rhyolite rock formations, are collectively known as the City of Rocks. Dry Creek Canyon, on the western side of the City of Rocks, has a perennial stream flowing within it. The far west side of the unit is mostly a gently sloping prairie, cut by the East Fork of Clover Creek and Catchall Creek. There are several basalt bluffs which overlook this portion of the unit. The northern end of the unit is a rolling prairie dissected by several intermittent stream drainages. There are several basalt bluffs dominating some portions of this prairie landscape. Dominant vegetation throughout the unit is sagebrush and annual and perennial grasses. The shaded portions of the canyons support a more luxuriant vegetation consisting of willow, aspen, cottonwood, serviceberry, and chokecherry.

NATURALNESS:

Several access routes, which meet the road definition, have caused parcels to be excluded from the unit. A parcel in the northeast corner has been dropped because it contains several roads and ways, as well as other substantial imprints of man. The boundary has been moved to exclude two sections of State land which are intersected by roads. Three roads have had a cherry stem boundary adjustment made to exclude them from the unit. Three other access routes, which are not substantial imprints on naturalness, extend into or through that part of the unit which meets naturalness criteria.

There are three chalk mines along the southwest boundary of the unit, one small mechanically constructed reservoir, three spring developments, a mechanically constructed canal, an old brush spraying and several fences within the unit. The majority of these imprints of man are within the portion deleted due to access roads.

SOLITUDE:

The numerous canyons and rhyolite rock formations in the southern portion of the unit provide excellent topographic screening. In addition, some portions of the canyon bottoms support a riparian vegetation which provides good vegetative screening. This combination of topographic and vegetative screening create an outstanding opportunity for solitude within the unit. The more northern portions of the unit have many rolling hills and buttes which also provide a good opportunity for solitude even though it may not be as outstanding as the southern portions.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive recreation opportunities within the unit are outstanding. Recreation is centered around the rock outcrops and canyons in the City of Rocks. Photography, hiking, camping, wildlife observation, and nature study are all considered outstanding. Many other activities including horseback riding, fishing, and hunting are also possible within the unit.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains outstanding examples of the geological processes of wind and fluvial erosion on rhyolite rock; one known archaeological site; nesting sites of the golden eagle, prairie falcon, red-tailed hawk, great horned owl, and short-eared owl; sage grouse strutting grounds; and outstanding scenic vistas of weathered rhyolite rock formations and deeply carved canyons.

REHABILITATION:

Four access routes have some potential for returning to a natural condition if vehicle access were restricted. With the passage of time, vegetation will grow in the routes and make them difficult to distinguish from the surrounding area. The three spring developments in the unit could all be rehabilitated to blend more with the surrounding landscape. The spring facilities could also be completely removed. All fences could be completely removed without leaving scars.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments opposed to identifying a study area within the unit are summarized as follows:

- Roads exist within the unit which were not identified in the proposed decision.
- Outstanding opportunities for solitude do not exist because the northern portion of the unit lacks screening, or because settlements outside the unit are visible from high points within the unit.
- Outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation do not exist because of adverse climatic conditions and rattlesnakes in unit, or because of overuse by recreationists at present.
- The unit does not meet the naturalness criteria because of the presence of fences, sheep camps, and waterholes.

Comments that supported identifying a study area are summarized as follows:

- The unit meets the naturalness criteria.
- The unit offers outstanding opportunities for solitude, and for primitive recreation.
- Various supplemental values are present in the unit.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

An access route (identified in the proposed decision) has been field checked in reference to the comments received which indicate that it should be identified as a road. The route is 1 1/4 miles in length. Comments indicated that this route receives regular use. Assuming that some maintenance is performed regularly when the route is used, the route should be identified as a road. This road would then form a new boundary for the unit, creating another unit on the west side of the road.

No other new roads or ways were identified. No new imprints of man were identified.

The reference in the proposed decision to rehabilitation was to portions of the unit that meet the naturalness criteria, not to those portions that do not.

Solitude:

Portions of the unit offer outstanding opportunities for solitude because the extensive canyon system and numerous rock formations offer topographic screening. Imprints of man outside the unit may be considered during the inventory only in situations where the imprint is adjacent to the unit and its impact so extremely imposing that it cannot be ignored. Distant vistas of Gooding, Bliss, or other settlements do not fit this criteria.

Many areas within the unit offer outstanding opportunities for solitude where settlements, fences, or other developments are not visible.

Primitive Recreation:

Outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation are considered to be present within the unit because of the presence of exceptional natural features and because of challenging terrain and physical conditions. Adverse climate and rattlesnakes may enhance elements of challenge and risk for the various primitive recreation opportunities.

* * *

DECISION:

Due to public comments and field evaluations, the road as discussed earlier, splits the unit into two parcels. Unit a (east portion), 14,743 acres; and unit b (west portion), 6,287 acres are identified as separate wilderness study areas as they both meet the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

54-10 DEER CREEK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 8,881 acres of BLM land with a 640 acre State land inholding. The unit lies southwest of the summit of Davis Mountain, one of the highest points in the Bennett Hills. It is 18 miles north of Bliss. The topography is dominated by a series of steep hills with several intermittent and perennial streams cutting between them. Rhyolite and basalt outcrops dominate the tops of many of the hills. Dominant vegetation throughout most of the unit is sagebrush and annual and perennial grasses. The higher portions of the unit have several scattered stands of aspen and clumps of tobacco brush. Indian paintbrush and lupine are also found at the higher elevations.

NATURALNESS:

Three access routes, associated with reservoir developments on the east side of the unit, have caused a parcel of land to be deleted from the unit. An access route in the southern part of the unit has caused deletion of another parcel. Three short access routes, which are not substantial imprints on naturalness, extend into the unit from the northern boundary road. All of the substantially noticeable imprints on naturalness have been deleted from the unit with boundary changes. The remaining lands within the unit appear to be affected primarily by the forces of nature.

SOLITUDE:

The unit is broken by many steep hills and gulleys which provide excellent topographic screening. The higher portion of the unit supports dense stands of aspen and undergrowth of tobacco brush which give a high degree of vegetative screening. Additional vegetative screening is provided by willows along portions of stream drainages. The combination of topographic and vegetative screening provides the visitor an outstanding opportunity to enjoy solitude.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The steep, rolling hills and numerous vistas within the unit contribute to make hiking, nature study, and photography opportunities outstanding. The scattered aspen groves provide variety in the landscape as well as shade. Less outstanding recreation opportunities include horseback riding and hunting.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit contains outstanding scenic vistas, and red-tailed hawk and great horned owl nesting sites.

REHABILITATION:

Five access routes have some potential for returning to a natural condition if vehicle access were restricted. With the passage of time, vegetation will grow in the routes and make them difficult to distinguish from the surrounding areas. All fences could be completely removed without leaving scars. All impacts within the unit could be returned to a natural condition with the passage of time and a very minimal amount of hand labor.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that opposed identifying a study area within the unit are summarized as follows:

- Roads exist in the unit which were not found in the inventory.
- Fences and other developments cause the unit not to meet the naturalness criteria.
- Since it is possible to see vistas of settlements from inside the unit, the unit does not meet the naturalness criteria.
- Outstanding opportunities for solitude do not exist in the unit because settlements can be seen from high points inside the unit.
- Outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation do not exist because the unit is too close to deeded land, or because of harsh climatic conditions and the presence of rattlesnakes.

Comments that supported the proposed decision to identify a study area in the unit are summarized as follows:

- The unit meets the naturalness criteria.
- Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation exist within the unit.
- Access routes identified in the proposed decision as not meeting road criteria will easily return to a natural condition.
- Various supplemental values were listed.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

No new roads or access routes have been located within the unit. Existing access routes were reevaluated and do not meet road criteria or represent a substantially noticeable imprint of man. No new fences were located in the unit.

The reference in the proposed decision to rehabilitation was to portions of the unit that meet the naturalness criteria, not to those portions that do not.

Solitude:

The unit's more than 12 miles of canyons, numerous aspen groves, and topographic screening provide outstanding opportunities for solitude. Imprints of man outside the unit may be considered during the inventory only in situations where the imprint is adjacent to the unit and its impact so extremely imposing that it cannot be ignored. Distant vistas of settlements do not fit this criteria.

Primitive Recreation:

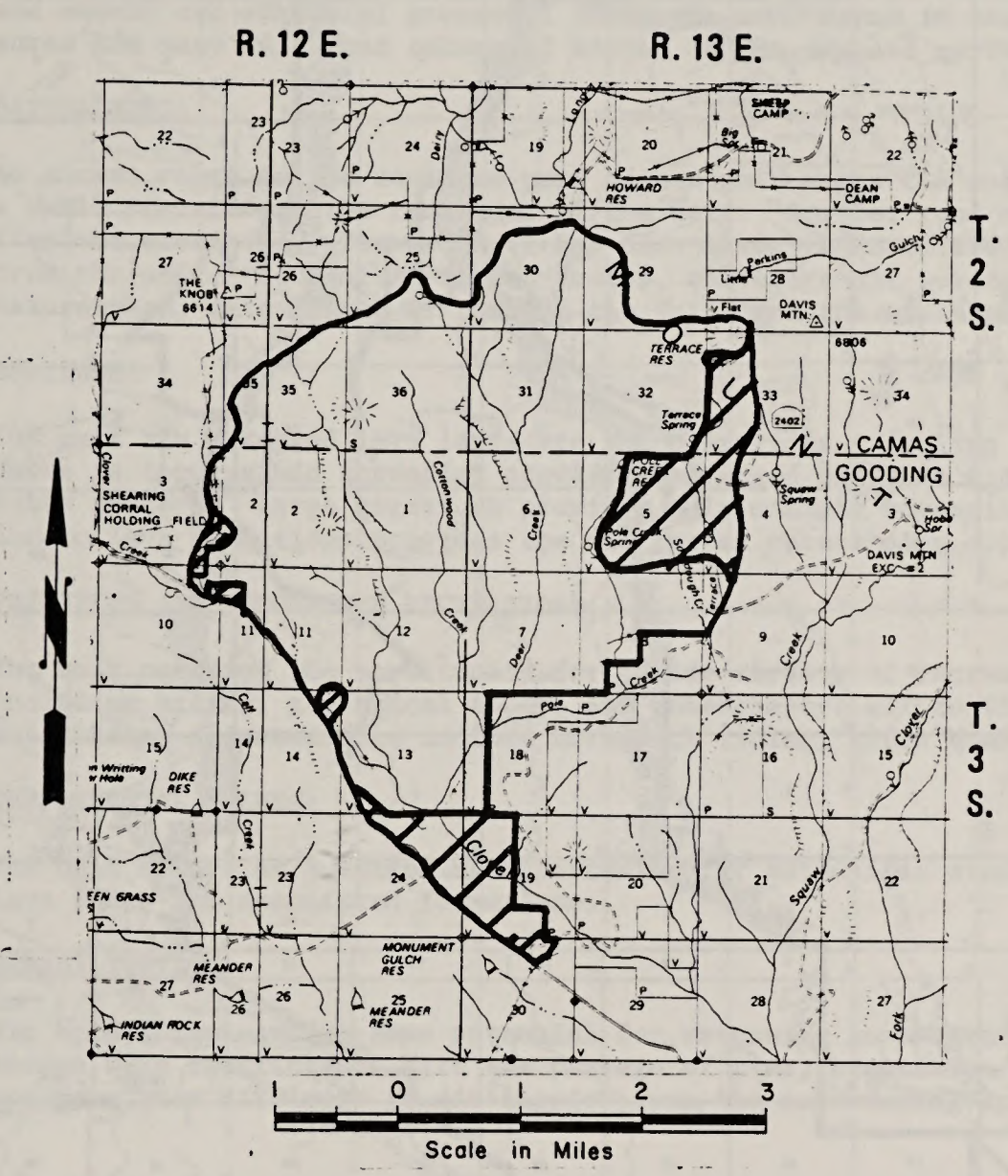
Present visitor use in a unit is not relevant to evaluating this criterion. The factor to be determined is whether an outstanding opportunity is present, regardless of present amount of use. Harsh climatic conditions and the presence of rattlesnakes may increase the elements of challenge and risk and enhance primitive recreation values. Outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation have been determined to exist in the unit because it provides exceptional scenery, diversity of landform, and mobility of travel in and out of more than 12 miles of canyons.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 7,487 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

54–10
DEER CREEK



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

56–2
LAVA

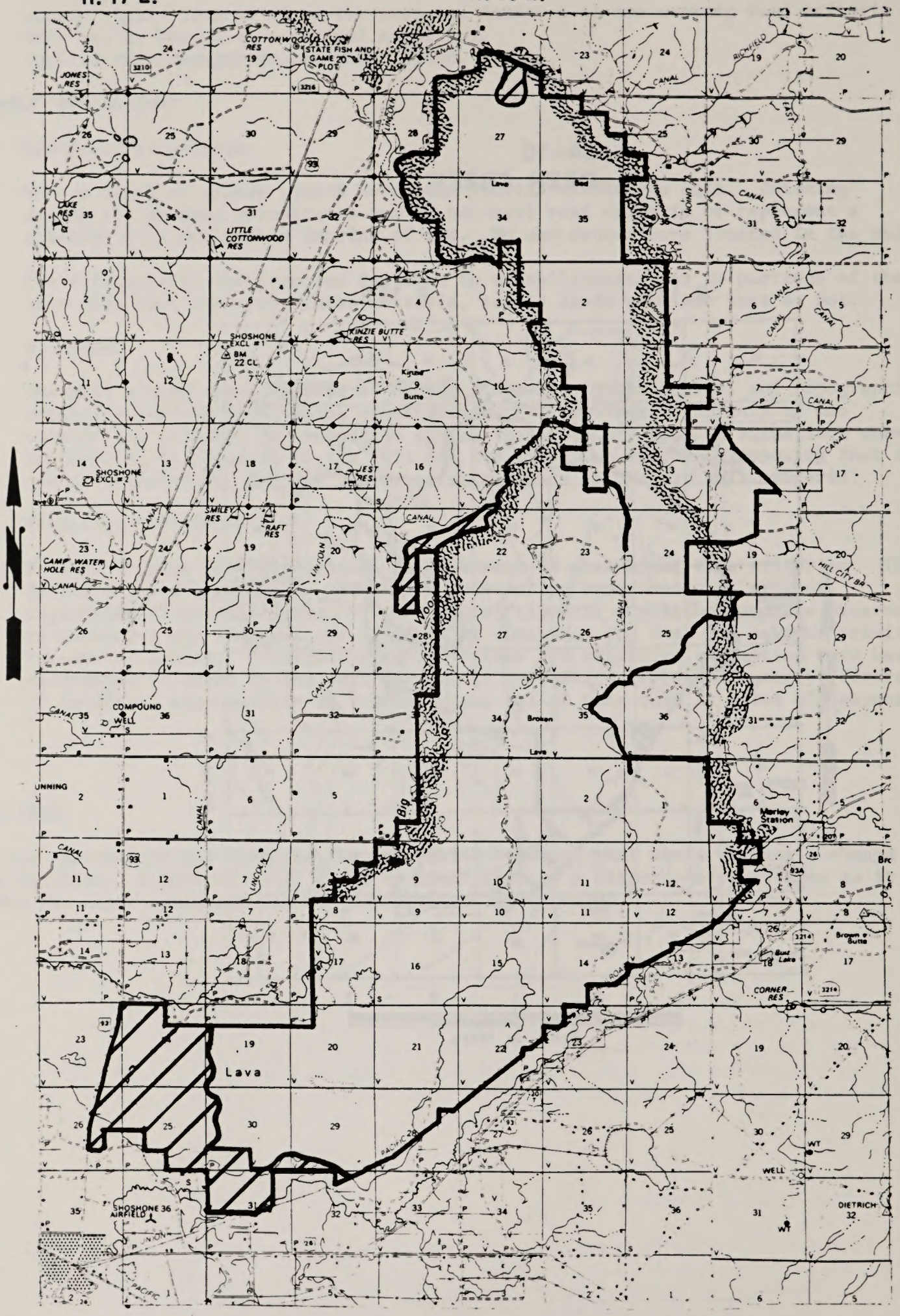
R. 17 E.

R. 18 E.

T. 3 S.

T. 4 S.

T. 5 S.



1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

56-2 LAVA

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 25,593 acres of BLM land. The August, 1979, report indicated that Unit 56-2 contained 9,400 acres of BLM land. Due to a more accurate calculation of acreage this figure should be 9,640 acres. Because of an erroneous identification of boundary roads during the initial inventory, Unit 56-3, containing 5,275 acres is now added as a part of Unit 56-2. Access routes identified previously as boundary roads of Units 56-2 and 56-3 were found during the Intensive Inventory to not meet the road definition, causing the addition of 10,678 acres to Unit 56-2, which now contains the total of 25,593 acres. The unit lies on a flat lava plain just northeast of Shoshone. The major portion of the unit is covered with a lava flow which contains many examples of pressure ridges and ropey lava. Dominant vegetation throughout the unit is sagebrush and annual and perennial grasses. There are some ferns in shaded portions of lava fissures and many different colors of lichen on the exposed surfaces of the lava.

NATURALNESS:

An access route in the southern part of the unit meets the road definition and splits a small parcel from the remainder of the unit. Another road extends into the unit from the west side. The boundary has been cherry stemmed around this road to exclude it from the unit. Four other access routes, which are not substantial imprints on naturalness, extend into or through the unit from the south and east boundaries.

SOLITUDE:

The unit has a rugged lava landscape which provides a feeling of remoteness and isolation. There is topographic screening provided by rugged pressure ridges, lava domes, and subsidence craters. Large sagebrush provides only minimal screening. The topographic relief due to lava formations provides the visitor an outstanding opportunity to enjoy solitude.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The unit contains the opportunity for a wide variety of recreational experiences, including hiking, geological study, and photography; all considered outstanding. Less outstanding opportunities include horseback riding, cross country skiing and camping.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit offers an outstanding opportunity for scientific study of geologic processes of lava flows and associated formations.

REHABILITATION:

Six access routes have some potential for returning to a natural condition if vehicle access were restricted. With the passage of time, vegetation will grow in the routes and make them difficult to distinguish from the surrounding area.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that opposed the identification of the unit as a study area are summarized as follows:

- There are many unimproved roads in the unit.
- The main canal runs through the unit; roads must be maintained along the canal.
- Outstanding opportunities for solitude do not exist in the unit because vehicle traffic, houses, and agricultural developments can be seen and/or heard inside the unit.
- Outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation do not exist in the unit because it has a hot, dry climate with little variation in topography.

Comments that supported the proposed decision are summarized as follows:

- The unit meets the naturalness criteria.
- The unit clearly meets the criteria for outstanding solitude and primitive recreation opportunities.
- Various supplemental values exist within the unit.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

Vehicle routes shown within the study area were identified in the proposed decision as access routes which do not meet the road criteria and which are substantially unnoticeable. In most cases these routes are two-wheel tracks winding through the rugged lava terrain with sagebrush growing between the tracks. In some cases, these routes have been so infrequently travelled in recent years that they have been obliterated by vegetative growth over much of their length. These routes, even when clearly defined as two tracks, are so well screened by low vegetation that they cannot be seen except when standing on or very close to them.

Inquiries have been made to the Big Wood Canal Company as to the existence of canals within the study area. They have confirmed that no canals are located within the unit. None of the access routes within the unit are maintained by the canal company, or needed to maintain the canal system. Features marked on the BLM map as canals are actually dry river beds with no construction or other visible imprints of man on them.

The reference in the proposed decision to rehabilitation was to portions of the unit that already meet the naturalness criteria, not to those portions that do not.

Solitude:

Opportunities for solitude within the study area are considered outstanding because of the topographic screening provided by numerous rugged lava outcrops, and the large size of the unit.

Field checks have determined that traffic sights and sounds from Highway 93 and other roads outside the unit cannot be seen or heard from large areas within the unit. Sights and sounds outside the unit may be considered during the inventory only in situations where the imprint is adjacent to the unit and its impact is so extremely imposing that it cannot be ignored. Imprints of man outside the unit such as roads, highways, and agricultural activity are not necessarily significant enough to cause their consideration in the inventory of a unit.

The agricultural developments adjacent to this unit do not have major impacts on the solitude of the unit. In many parts of the unit agricultural developments are not visible, and if visible from the central part of the unit are not clearly distinguishable as agricultural land.

Primitive Recreation:

Opportunities for primitive recreation are considered outstanding in the study area because it contains a large and exceptional geological feature, the recent Black Butte Lava Flow. Recreation opportunities are enhanced by the elements of challenge and risk which are encountered when travelling through the rugged landscape on foot.

Present visitor use is not relevant to evaluating this criterion. The factor to be determined is whether an outstanding opportunity is present regardless of present amount of use. A hot and dry desert environment, if one is prepared to deal with it, does not preclude the opportunity to have an outstanding recreation experience, in fact, it adds to the physical challenge of the experience.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 23,680 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

57-2 SHALE BUTTE

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 21,898 acres of BLM land, with a 640 acre State land inholding. This differs from the 21,661 acres shown in the August 1979 report, due to the addition of 237 acres where the boundary was incorrectly identified during the Initial Inventory.

The unit lies 15 miles southeast of Richfield. The unit is dominated by a large, relatively recent lava flow from the Shale Butte formation. Portions of the lava flow are extremely rugged with many pressure ridges, lava domes, and subsidence craters. Also in the unit are desert grasslands around the fringe of the lava flow.

NATURALNESS:

Several access routes, many the result of activities by National Guard tanks, create a concentration of substantially noticeable imprints on the naturalness of the unit. A large parcel of land has been deleted from the southern part of the unit to eliminate these routes. Another access route has caused a parcel of land on the west side of the unit to be deleted. Three access routes, which are not substantially noticeable imprints on naturalness extend a short distance into the unit. Two are located on the north boundary and one on the south boundary.

SOLITUDE:

Opportunities for solitude exist throughout most of the unit. Its remote location, the absence of man-made features, and the low probability of meeting others enhance opportunities for solitude. Outstanding opportunities for solitude have been judged to be present within the lava formation which occupies the central portion of the unit. The rugged, broken topography in the lavas provides excellent screening.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive recreation opportunities within the unit are considered outstanding and generally focus on the volcanic features and associated biotic community. Activities include hiking, camping, photography, and nature study. The unit offers a challenge and risk with all recreation activities which enhances the primitive experience. The factors of challenge and risk are emphasized by the rugged terrain, lack of reliable water sources, extreme temperatures, and lack of natural shelter.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

A burrowing owl (sensitive species) has a nesting site in the unit. The lava flow offers excellent opportunities to study primary succession and the geology of volcanic formations.

REHABILITATION:

Two access routes have some possibility of returning to a more natural condition if vehicular use were restricted. With the passage of time, vegetation will grow in the routes making it difficult to distinguish the routes from the rest of the area.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that supported the proposed decision to identify a study area are summarized as follows:

- Dropped acreage should be added back to the area proposed as a study area.
- The unit meets the naturalness criteria.
- Outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation exist in the unit.
- Various supplemental values were mentioned.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

Extensive imprints of man in the form of tank tracks and random vehicle tracks of other kinds have left a noticeable mark on the naturalness of the lands dropped from the southern part of the unit. An access route, which is a major imprint on naturalness, cuts a parcel of less than 5,000 acres from the west side of the unit. No information in the comments indicates that an error was made in deleting these parcels from the unit.

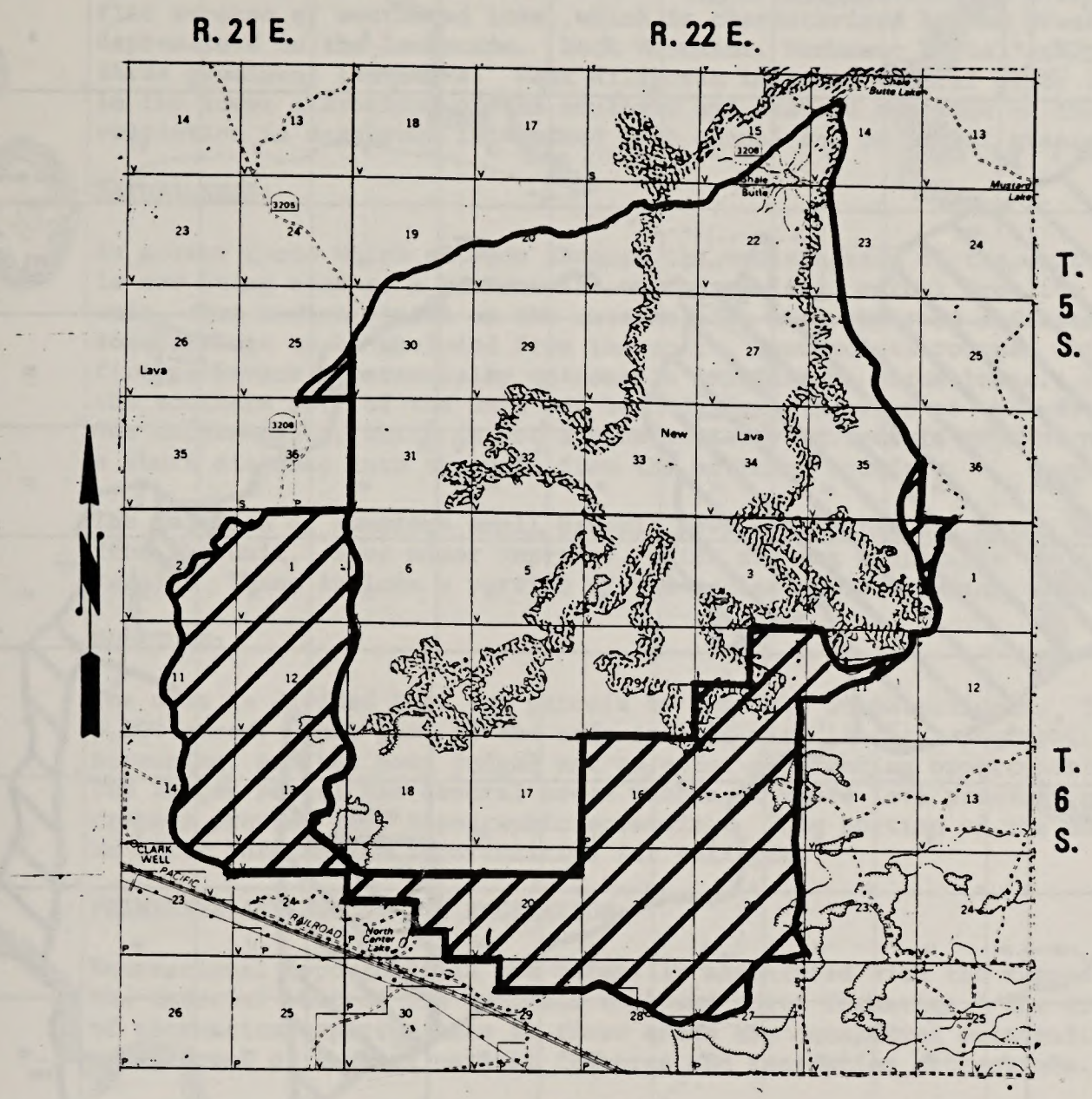
The reference in the proposed decision to rehabilitation was to portions of the unit that meet the naturalness criteria, not to those portions that do not.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 15,968 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

57–2
SHALE BUTTE



LEGEND

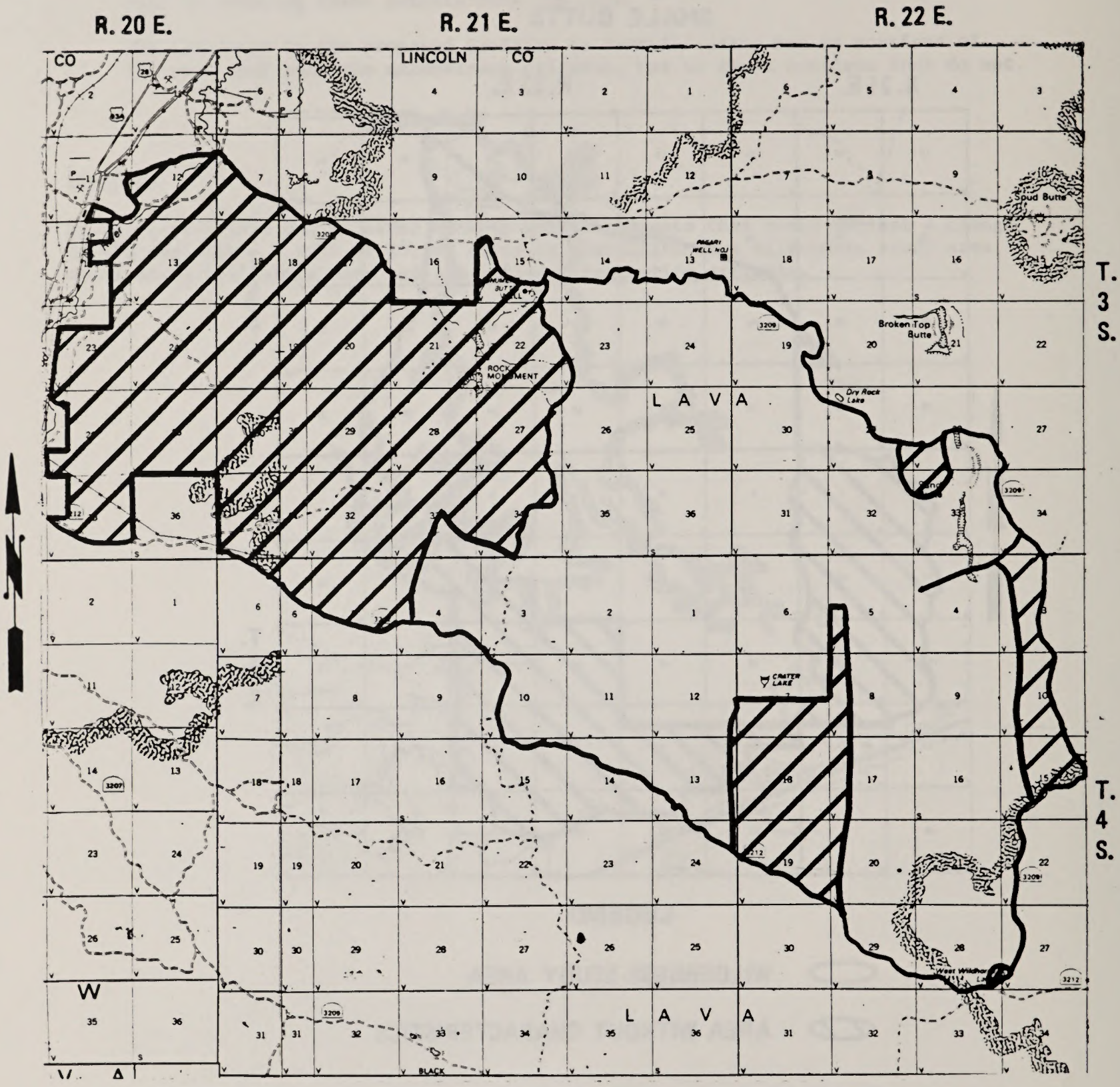
WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

57–8
SAND BUTTE



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

57-8 SAND BUTTE

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 36,745 acres of BLM land with State land inholdings totalling 1,280 acres. This figure differs from the 37,519 acres shown in the August 1979, report, due to a more accurate calculation of acreage.

The unit lies northeast of Richfield. Topography consists of a large, relatively flat expanse of weathered lava, which is characterized by low pressure ridges and depressions in the landscape. Rock Monument, Monument Butte, and Sand Butte are three prominent landmarks. West Wildhorse Lake and several other lake beds are found in the lower elevations of the southern and eastern portions of the unit. Dominant vegetation is sagebrush intermixed with annual and perennial grasses.

NATURALNESS:

An access route which extends through the western part of the unit from north to south is now being used as a boundary to exclude a large parcel from the western side of the unit. Two access routes on the eastern side meet the road definition and have caused some acreage to be excluded from the unit. Four access routes, which appear to be old firebreaks are substantially noticeable imprints on naturalness. A parcel of land in the southern part of the unit has been deleted in order to exclude these access routes. One access route, which is not a substantially noticeable imprint on naturalness, extends a short distance into the unit from the northern boundary.

The deletion of numerous small parcels have eliminated all major imprints on naturalness from the unit. Some minor imprints, which are not noticeable to the average person, remain. These include a portion of two access routes, aerial seedings, and fence lines.

SOLITUDE:

The unit is divided into two parcels by imprints on naturalness. The smaller contains 5,900 acres. This part of the unit is flat with little topographic or vegetative screening, and has been judged not to offer outstanding opportunities for solitude. The larger parcel has several areas within it where lava pressure ridges and subsidence craters provide good topographic screening. This portion of the unit has been judged to offer outstanding opportunities for solitude.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Recreational opportunities are primarily associated with the rugged lava formations in the interior part of the unit and the Sand Butte formation. The diversity and quality of recreation opportunities in these areas are considered outstanding because of their exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

Wildlife species including burrowing owls (sensitive species), marsh hawks, red-tailed hawks, and coyotes were observed during the inventory. Lava formations offer excellent opportunities for geologic studies. Cairns may have archaeological/historical significance. West Wildhorse Lake and other lake beds in the unit may also have archaeological significance.

REHABILITATION:

An access route has already become partially overgrown with vegetation. With the passage of time, this route could become hard to distinguish from the surrounding area. Fence lines can be removed or modified by hand labor to make them even less noticeable.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that supported a study area larger than that identified in the proposed decision are summarized as follows:

- Ten thousand acres were inappropriately excluded from the unit.
- The area that has been excluded in the proposed decision has outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation.

Comments that supported the proposed decision generally just stated that the area met the wilderness criteria.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

Numerous imprints of man on naturalness, as noted in the proposed decision, are concentrated in the western portion of the unit. Since these imprints are closely grouped, an access route, which does not meet the road criteria, was used as the boundary to exclude them from the unit. A parcel of land, completely surrounded by the excluded imprints of man, but which meets the size and naturalness criteria, was also excluded from the main unit.

Solitude:

It is generally recognized that the lack of topography and tall vegetation limits the opportunity to achieve solitude unless the area is large. Low vegetation on flat terrain can provide excellent screening if the area is large enough to allow other visitors or external influences to blend or disappear into the landscape. The parcel noted above is not large enough to allow a number of user groups or external influences to blend into the landscape.

Primitive Recreation:

The opportunity to achieve a primitive recreation experience is dependent upon the unit's size and ability to provide exceptional or unusual natural features and recreation attractions. Exceptional natural features are those which provide exceptional scenery, diversity of landform and/or mobility of travel for a visitor, and would result in a strong recreation attraction to an area for one or more types of activities.

The parcel noted above has neither the size nor the exceptional or unusual natural features to provide primitive recreation opportunities which could be considered outstanding.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 20,792 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

57-10 RAVEN'S EYE

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 67,300 acres of BLM land, with State land inholdings totalling 1,920 acres. In the August, 1979, report Unit 57-10 was shown as 51,609 acres. It was determined through field inventory that a route previously used as a boundary between Units 57-9 (15,387 acres) and 57-10 does not meet the road definition. Therefore, both units are combined as Unit 57-10. An additional adjustment of 304 acres was made to include lands where a route used as part of the unit boundary was found not to exist on the ground.

An extension of Craters of the Moon lava flow dominates the northern portion of the unit. This rugged new lava is characterized by impressive spatter cones, pressure ridges, subsidence craters, and other formations that are unique to volcanic regions. The southern portion of the unit consists of older, weathered lava. Numerous rock outcrops characterize the broken topography of this high desert terrain. Dominant vegetational species are sagebrush, rabbitbrush, and annual and perennial grasses. Sand Butte and Broken Top Butte are prominent landmarks within the unit.

NATURALNESS:

An access route which extends through the unit from the eastern boundary, past Spud Butte to the Monument Butte well was originally identified as a road and was the southern boundary of this unit. Further inventory shows that only 1.8 miles of this access route, the segment from the eastern boundary road to Spud Butte, meets the road definition. The remaining portion of the route is only a faint way and is not a substantially noticeable imprint on the naturalness of the unit. This has resulted in the boundary being moved to include Unit 57-9 with 57-10 as one unit. The boundary is cherry stemmed around the road segment from the eastern boundary to Spud Butte.

Three short access routes, which are not substantially noticeable imprints on the naturalness of the unit, extend into the unit from the eastern boundary. Two other short routes extend into the unit from the southern boundary. A well development and two reservoir developments have a noticeable impact on the apparent naturalness in the unit. Several fences and an aerial seeding do not have a noticeable impact on the naturalness.

SOLITUDE:

Opportunities for solitude exist throughout most of the unit and are judged to be outstanding. Its remote location, and large size reduce the probability of meeting others and thus enhance opportunities for solitude. The broken topography of the high desert terrain and the new lava flow provide excellent screening from the sights and sounds of others.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive recreation opportunities within the area are judged to be outstanding and generally focus on the volcanic features and the biotic communities of the new lava flow and the surrounding desert lands. Activities include hiking, showshoeing, cross-country skiing, camping, photography, nature study, hunting, and spelunking. The unit offers challenge and risk with all recreation activities which enhances the primitive experience.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The new lava offers excellent opportunities to study primary succession, vegetational species that are indigenous to new lava, and geology of lava formations. Cairns, found throughout the unit, could be of historical or archaeological significance. Wildlife species, including pronghorn antelope, coyotes, burrowing owls (sensitive species), and sage grouse were observed during the inventory. Numerous lake beds exist within the unit. These areas plus Spud Butte and Broken Top Butte may contain archaeological sites.

REHABILITATION:

Six access routes could, over a period of several years, reach a condition where they are completely covered with vegetation and indistinguishable from surrounding areas. Extensive hand labor may be necessary to obliterate deeply worn ruts on one route. Fence lines could be modified to make them less noticeable or removed with hand labor.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

All but one of the comments which specifically addressed the unit supported the proposed decision to identify a study area. One comment expressed a concern over the statements on rehabilitation.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

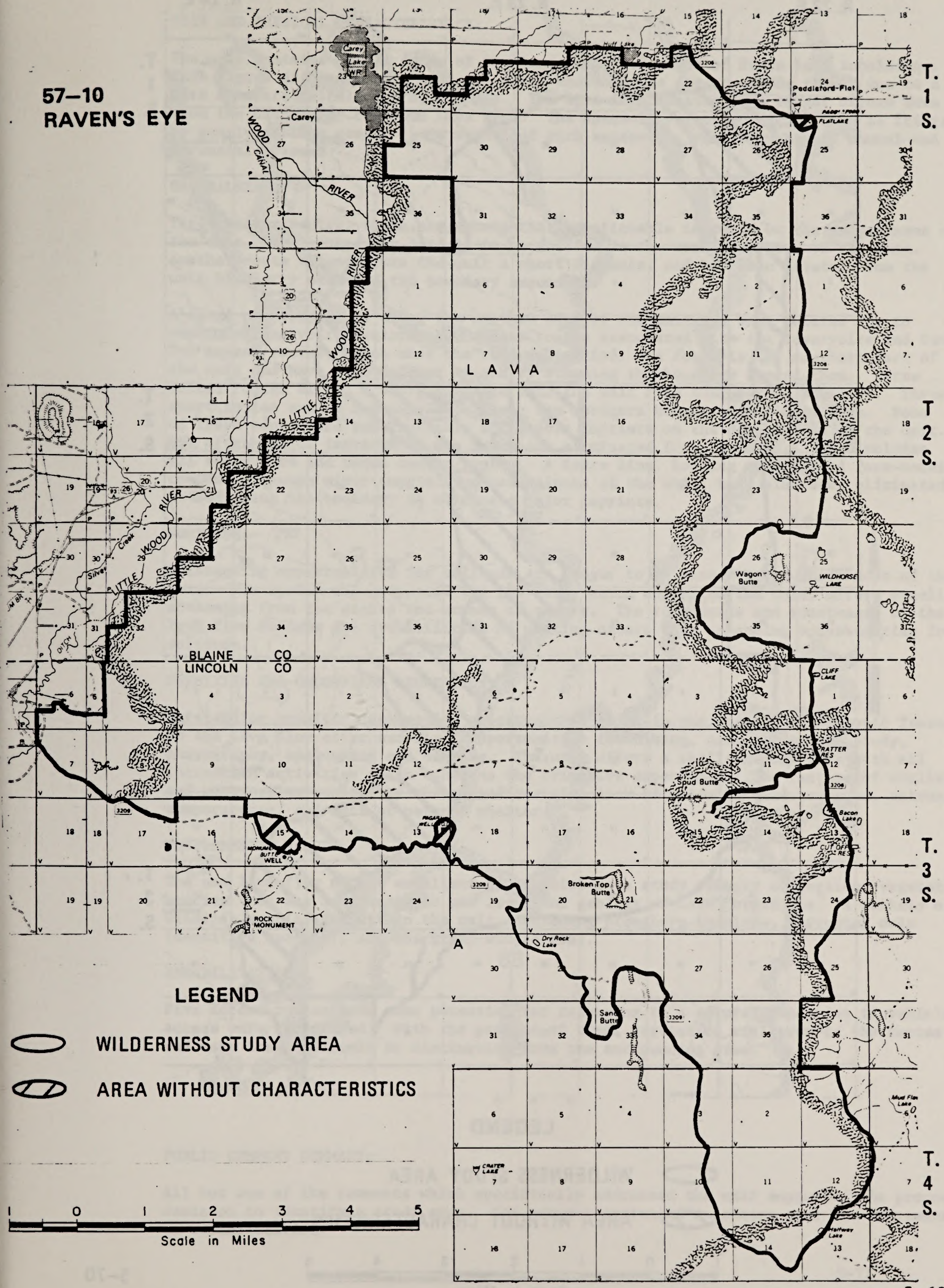
The reference in the proposed decision to rehabilitation was to the portions of the unit that meet the naturalness criteria, not to portions that do not.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 67,110 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

57–10
RAVEN'S EYE



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

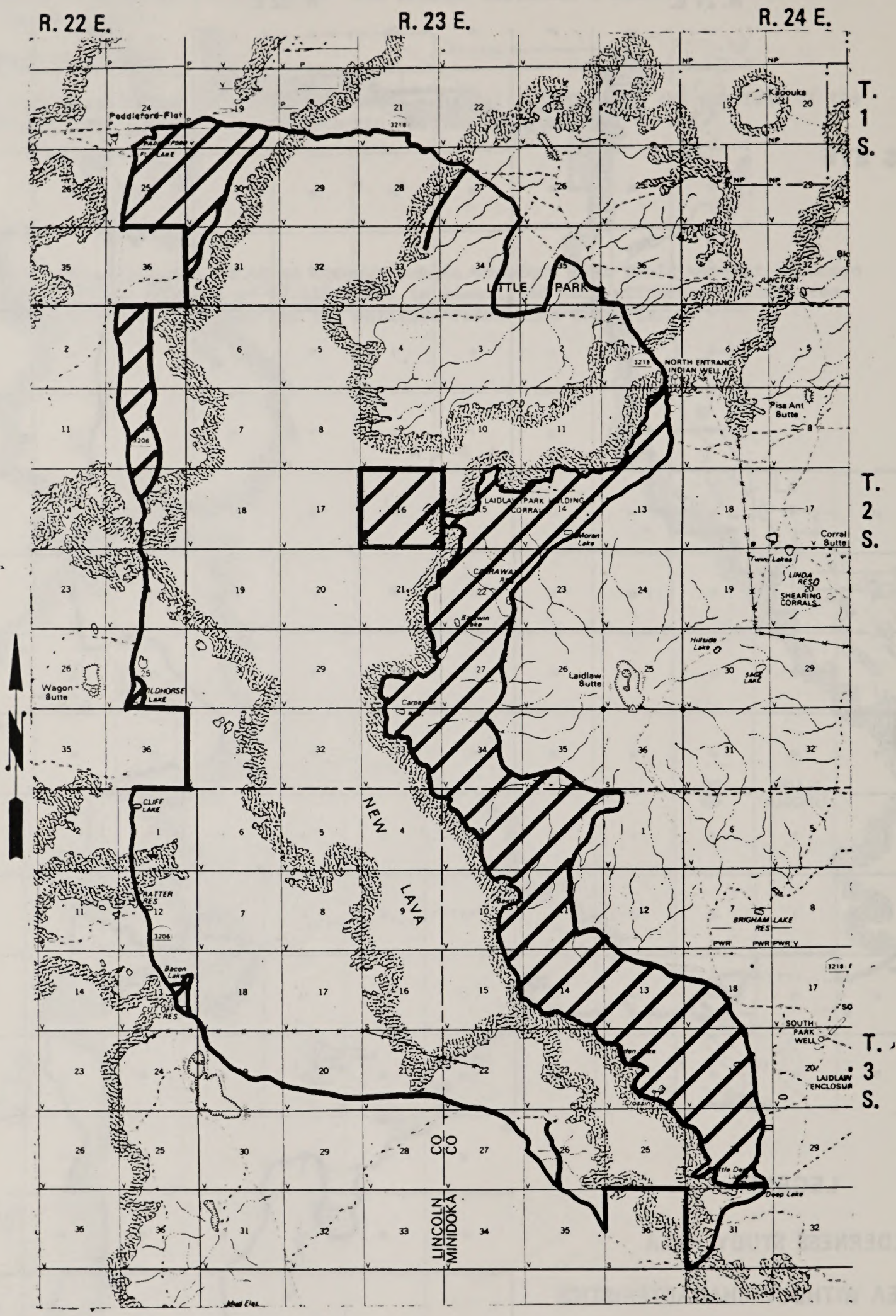
AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

5-69

57–11
LITTLE DEER



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

57-11 LITTLE DEER

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 42,974 acres of BLM land, with 640 acres of State land inholdings. This figure differs from the 43,156 acres shown in the August, 1979, report due to a more accurate calculation of acreage. The unit is dominated by a finger of new lava from the Craters of the Moon Lava Flow. The sparsely vegetated rugged lava is fringed by gently rolling desert lands vegetated with sagebrush, rabbitbrush, and annual and perennial grasses.

NATURALNESS:

Three access routes, which are substantially noticeable imprints on the naturalness of the unit, have caused two parcels to be deleted in the northwest part of the unit. Another route extends into the unit a short distance, and has been deleted from the unit by cherry stemming the boundary around it.

A large parcel of land along the eastern edge of the unit has been deleted due to numerous reservoir developments, access routes associated with the reservoirs and fences. Two access routes, which meet the road definition, are found in the southern part of the unit and have been deleted by cherry stemming the boundary around them. Three access routes extend a short distance into the unit from the western boundary. Three short routes extend into the unit along the northern boundary in Little Park. None of these routes are substantially noticeable imprints on the naturalness of the unit. All of the major imprints of man have been eliminated from the unit; this includes all reservoirs and seven access routes. A fence line, holding corral, and four access routes, although minor imprints on naturalness of the unit, have also been eliminated in redrawing the boundary to eliminate major imprints.

SOLITUDE:

Outstanding opportunities for solitude are judged to be present throughout most of the unit. The broken topography of the new lava, which dominates the unit, offers excellent screening from the sights and sounds of others. The ruggedness and remoteness of the lava flow reduces the probabilities of meeting others thus enhancing opportunities for solitude.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding primitive recreation opportunities exist in the unit. The volcanic features on the lava flow offer excellent opportunities for hiking, camping, nature study, photography, spelunking and hunting. The unit offers a challenge and risk with all recreation activities which enhances the primitive experience. The factors of challenge and risk are emphasized by the rugged terrain, lack of reliable water sources, extreme temperatures, and lack of natural shelter.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The new lava flow offers excellent opportunities to study primary succession, vegetational species that are indigenous to new lava, and geology of lava formations. A variety of wildlife species are within the unit, including pronghorn antelope, burrowing owls (sensitive species), and the green-winged teal.

REHABILITATION:

Five access routes have some potential for returning to a natural condition if vehicle access were restricted. With the passage of time, vegetation will grow in the routes and make them difficult to distinguish from the surrounding area.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

All but one of the comments which specifically addressed the unit supported the proposed decision to identify a study area. One comment expressed a concern over the statements on rehabilitation.

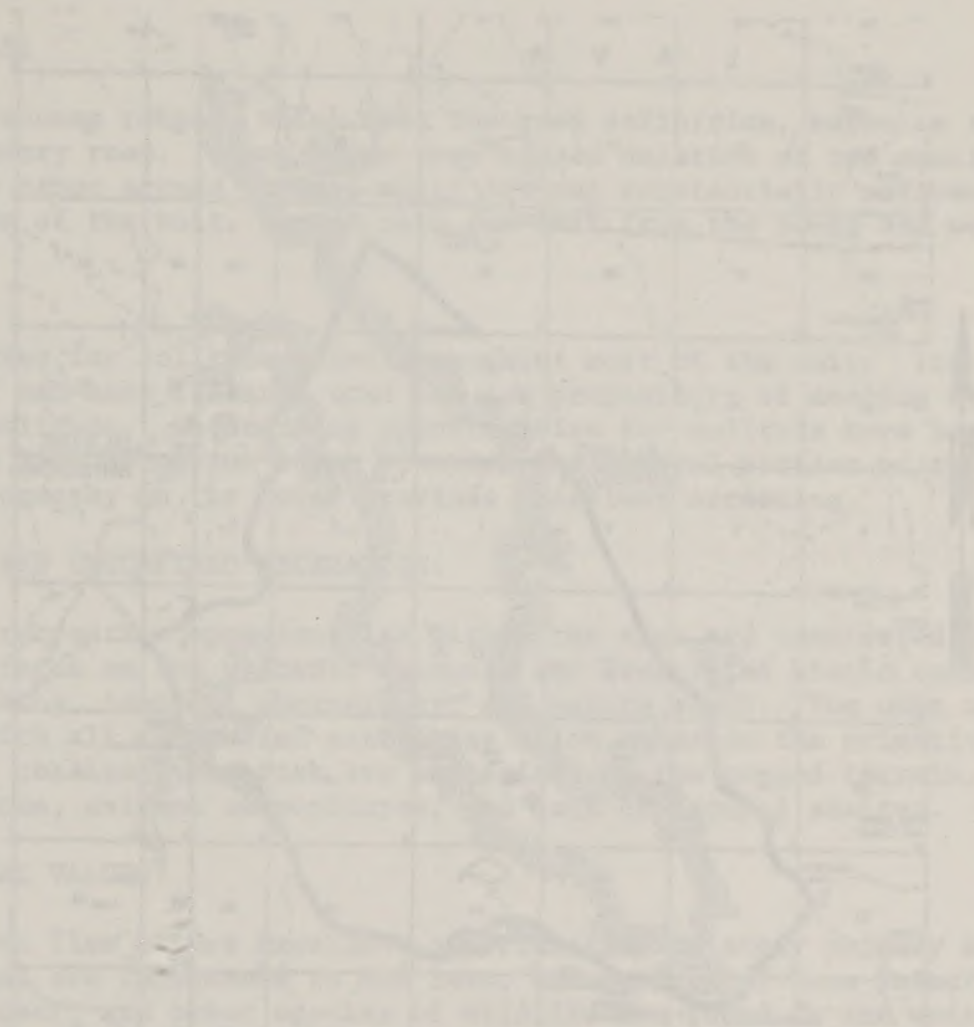
COMMENT EVALUATION:

The reference in the proposed decision to rehabilitation was to the portions of the unit that meet the naturalness criteria not to portions that do not.

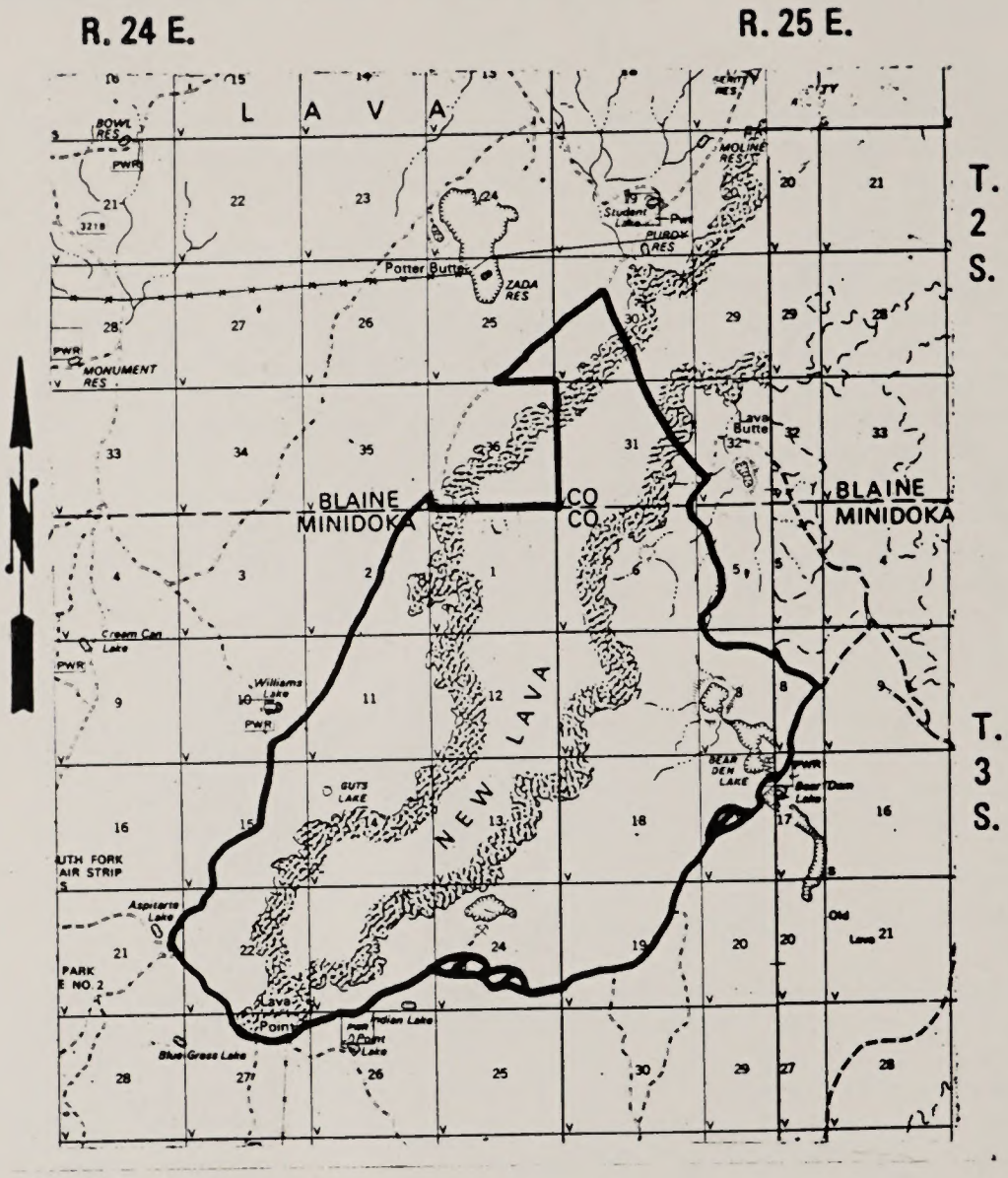
* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 33,531 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meet the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.



57–14
BEAR DEN BUTTE



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

57-14 BEAR DEN BUTTE

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evalution of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 9,704 acres of BLM land. The unit is dominated by a finger of new lava which juts into Laidlaw Park from the Craters of the Moon Lava Flow. The unit is surrounded by a fringe of rolling desert grassland except where the road forming the north boundary cuts through the lava. Bear Den Butte and a smaller unnamed volcanic butte are prominent landmarks within the unit, representing older periods of volcanic activity. Vegetation is primarily sagebrush and grasses on the desert fringe with very sparse vegetation occurring in the newer lava.

NATURALNESS:

Two short access routes, which meet the road definition, serve as turnouts along the south boundary road. These roads have caused deletion of two small parcels from the unit. Two other access routes, which are not substantially noticeable imprints on the naturalness of the unit, extend into the unit from the south and west boundaries.

SOLITUDE:

Opportunities for solitude exist throughout most of the unit. Its remote location, the absence of man-made features, and the low probability of meeting others enhance opportunities for solitude. Outstanding opportunities for solitude have been judged to be present within the lava formation which occupies the central portion of the unit. The rugged, broken topography in the lavas provides excellent screening.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive recreation opportunities within the area are considered outstanding and generally focus on the volcanic features and associated biotic community. Activities include hiking, camping, photography, and nature study. The unit offers a challenge and risk with all recreation activities which enhances the primitive experience. The factors of challenge and risk are emphasized by the rugged terrain, lack of reliable water sources, extreme temperatures, and lack of natural shelter.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The new lava flow offers excellent opportunities to study primary succession, vegetational species that are indigenous to new lava, and geology of lava formations. Pronghorn antelope, deer, and other species of wildlife are found in the unit. Guts Lake, a series of lake beds along the western side of the unit, may have archaeological value. Bear Den Butte (5,104 feet elevation) and another butte (5,022 feet) offer scenic values.

REHABILITATION:

One access route has revegetated to a condition where it is difficult to distinguish from the surrounding area. Once erosion is stabilized with hand labor, another route should revegetate naturally and become difficult to distinguish from the surrounding area. A fence line could be removed by hand labor or modified to be much less noticeable.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

All but one of the comments which specifically addressed the unit supported the proposed decision to identify a study area. One comment expressed a concern over the statements on rehabilitation.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

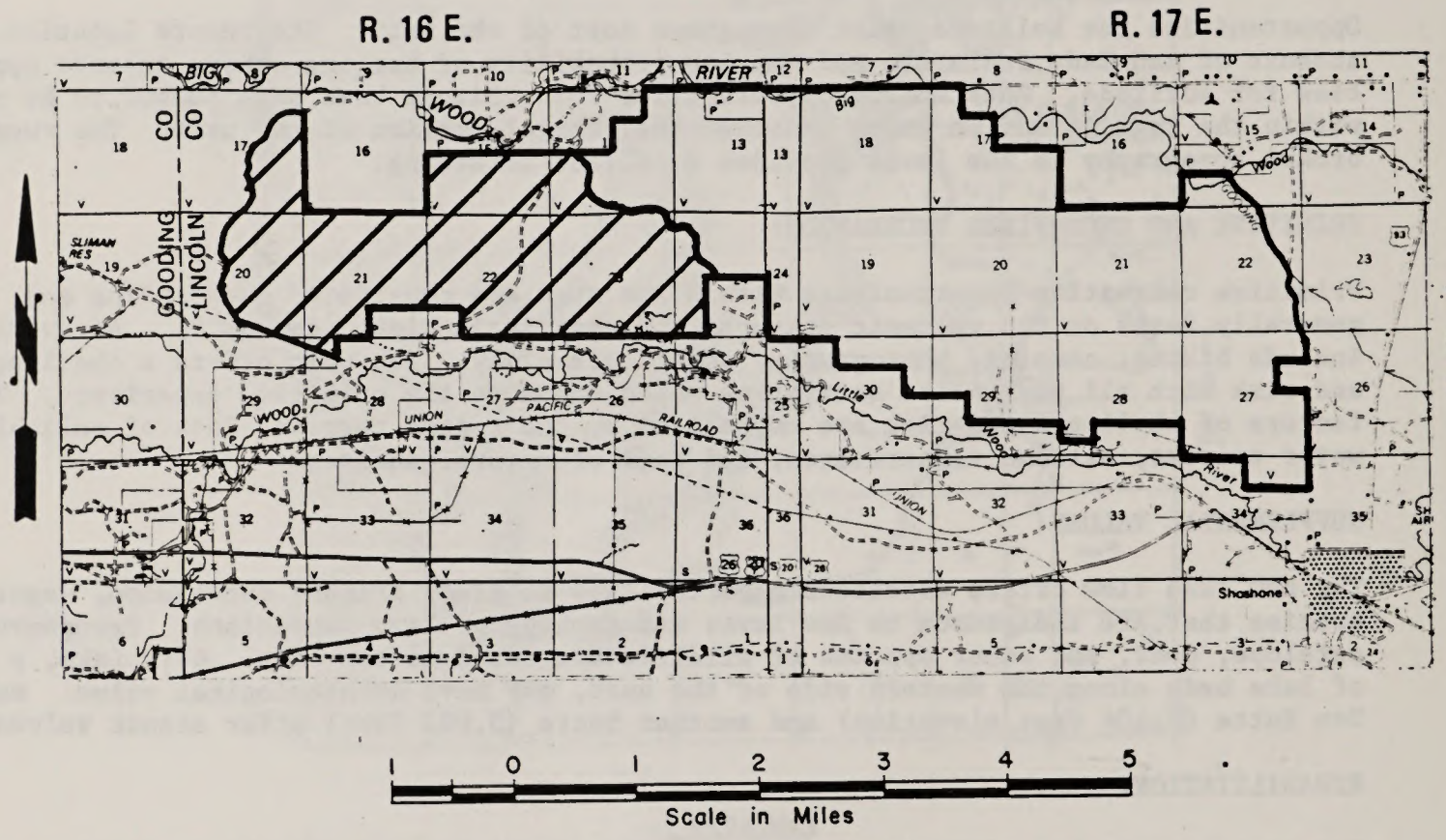
The reference in the proposed decision to rehabilitation was to the portions of the unit that meet the naturalness criteria, not to portions that do not.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 9,700 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

59–7
SHOSHONE



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 9,928 acres of BLM land. This unit was called Lava in the August, 1979, report. The unit is entirely covered with a relatively recent lava flow which originated from the Black Butte vent. This lava flow is extremely rough, with numerous subsidence craters, pressure ridges, and other volcanic formations found throughout the unit. Vegetation is generally sparse, but in some places sagebrush and grasses have become established.

NATURALNESS:

Two access routes, which meet the road definition have caused part of the unit to be deleted on the western side.

SOLITUDE:

Opportunities for solitude exist throughout most of the unit. Its remote location, the absence of man-made features, and the low probability of meeting other visitors enhance opportunities for solitude. Outstanding opportunities for solitude have been judged to be present within the lava formation which occupies the central portion of the unit. The rugged, broken topography in the lavas provides excellent screening.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Primitive recreation opportunities within the unit are considered outstanding and generally focus on the volcanic features and associated biotic community. Activities include hiking, camping, photography, and nature study. The unit offers a challenge and risk with all recreation activities which enhances the primitive experience. The factors of challenge and risk are emphasized by the rugged terrain, lack of reliable water sources, extreme temperatures, and lack of natural shelter.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The unit provides several opportunities to study phenomena related to volcanism.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that supported the proposed decision to identify the unit as a study area are summarized as follows:

- The unit clearly meets the criteria for naturalness.
- Outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation exist within the unit.
- Various supplemental values are found within the unit.

One comment expressed a concern over the statements on rehabilitation.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

The reference in the proposed decision to rehabilitation was to portions of the unit that meet the naturalness criteria, not to portions that do not.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 6,914 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

COEUR D'ALENE DISTRICT

UNITS NOT IDENTIFIED AS

WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

61–6c
HIDEAWAY ISLAND



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

61-6c HIDEAWAY ISLAND

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

This unit consists of two adjacent islands in the Kootenai River. The islands are approximately equal in size, containing a total of 170 acres of BLM land. The channel that divides the two is the most susceptible to seasonal fluctuations of water flow. The easternmost island is almost completely covered with dense vegetation, consisting of a predominant overstory of cottonwood, with a thick undergrowth of shrubs and herbaceous species. The other island consists primarily of gravel, though the southern edge contains vegetation similar to the first, but less extensive. Topographic relief is virtually absent on both islands.

NATURALNESS:

Both islands appear to be essentially natural with no evidence of human activity apparent.

SOLITUDE:

Outstanding opportunities for solitude are precluded by the islands' small size. Within the 170 acres, it would be difficult to avoid the sights and sounds of others. Screening is available in those areas containing dense vegetation. This vegetation offers effective screening for users, however, frequent contact would be readily available. No screening is available from topography. Sounds of other users would be easily transmitted throughout this small area.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation do not exist on these islands. The uniform topography and vegetation do not supply the base for a variety of recreation activities, nor is the opportunity for any single activity considered outstanding. Fishing is the activity most suited to the islands; however, the opportunity at this location is similar, if not inferior, to other areas along the Kootenai River. The unit also offers the same opportunity that is available on other islands for overnight or day use by river users.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The islands have been identified as important habitat type for waterfowl, and wood frogs (a sensitive species).

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Specific reasons given for the unit qualifying as a study area were as follows:

- Size should not disqualify the unit.
- Outstanding opportunities for solitude exist as a result of dense vegetation.
- Supplemental values are present.
- The islands are self-contained ecosystems.

Other comments indicated that the unit did not meet the size requirement.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Size:

The size of the island cannot disqualify it, as all islands regardless of size were subject to inventory. Only as the size effects opportunities for outstanding solitude or primitive recreation does it play a role in the determination of the islands' wilderness characteristics.

Solitude:

Vegetation is dense on approximately half of this unit and the remainder is primarily sand and gravel. Approximately 80 acres of vegetated island would provide solitude for a limited number of users, but only if they were in a motionless state. Movement among users would lessen this limited opportunity for solitude. In addition, sounds travel easily over this small area thereby further reducing the opportunity to experience solitude.

Supplemental Values:

Wildlife and the island habitat itself are considered to be supplemental values, however, these values do not by themselves qualify the unit for further study. They may enhance an area's wilderness quality, but not necessitate further study if other characteristics are lacking. A self-contained ecosystem would be a supplemental value, however, it is not a characteristic that would necessarily qualify an area for further study.

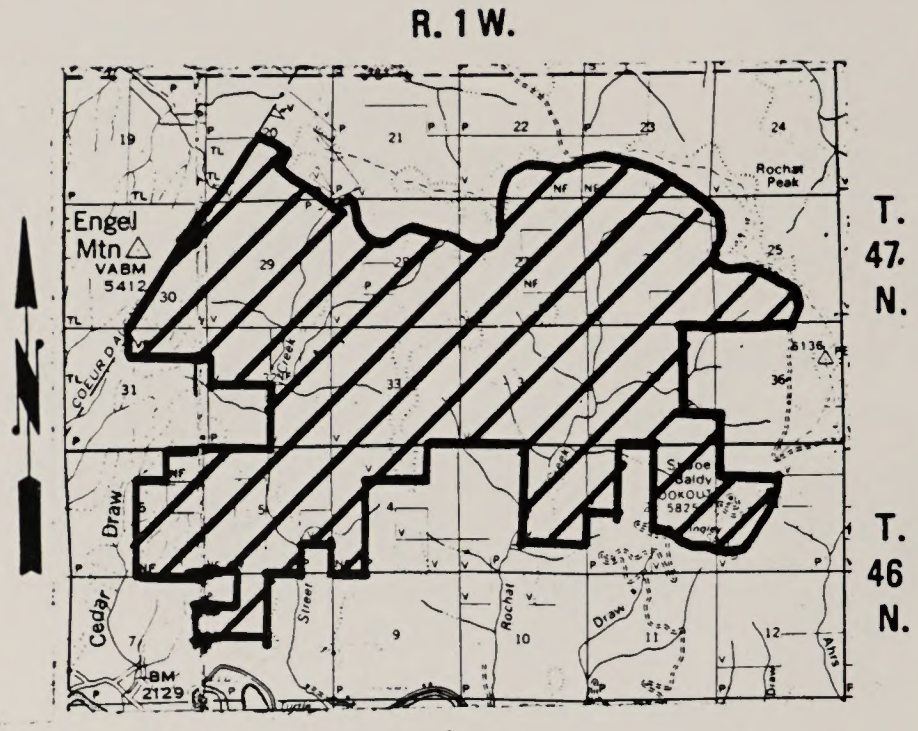
* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.



61–9
ROCHAT CREEK



61-9 ROCHAT CREEK

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 5,285 acres of BLM land and 1,675 acres in scattered parcels of the St. Joe National Forest, a total of 6,960 acres. One 40 acre parcel of private land is located within the unit. The unit is characterized by steep slopes descending into two drainages. A short ridge separates the Rochat and Street Creek drainages. This ridge contains the most prominent point in the unit, 5,268 feet with slopes descending 2,800 feet at the bottom of both drainages. Several smaller streams feed each of the primary drainages, though none of them break up the uniformity of the basin-like character of this unit. Most of the unit contains a dense cover of brush as a result of a fire. Stands of timber are scattered throughout the unit.

NATURALNESS:

The unit remains in an essentially natural condition. The major impact is a one mile way which departs from the north boundary road. The way climbs a steep, bare hillside and was originally constructed but has since reverted to a way status. The area in which this way is located was at one time sprayed for brush control and trees planted, though no evidence of this activity is evident. This way is visible throughout much of the Street Creek drainage due to the limited screening from both topography and vegetation. Growth of vegetation near the way is beginning to lessen its impact though it will still remain visible for many years. Two other ways also depart from boundary roads. Both penetrate less than ½ mile into the unit and constitute only a minor impact.

SOLITUDE:

The open nature of the unit precludes outstanding opportunity for solitude. The unit contains portions of two broad, open drainages and a ridge which separates them. The lack of widespread vegetative screening, and very little topographic relief creates broad views in each drainage. Under these conditions the presence of other users is easily determined. Few locations exist in which a visitor may isolate himself from others, only in areas containing forest cover would this be possible.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

Only a limited opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation is available, with the primary limitation being the overall uniformity of the unit. The uniformity of both terrain and vegetation does not supply the base needed for a variety of recreation pursuits, nor are there unique features which would attract a single use. This uniformity limits the appeal of such activities as backpacking, photography and general sightseeing. Another limitation is the extremely steep nature of the terrain, which restricts the freedom of movement for activities such as horseback riding, hiking, hunting, and fishing.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that disagreed with the proposed decision that the unit be dropped from further study felt that the unit's brush and scattered stands of timber did provide an opportunity to experience solitude. Others felt this unit should be considered in conjunction with the adjacent unit. Comments agreeing with the proposed decision indicated a lack of naturalness, due to imprints of man.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Size:

Identifying the unit as a study area in conjunction with an adjacent unit is not provided for in the inventory policy when the units are separated by roads.

Naturalness:

Contrary to public comment, the majority of the unit is in an essentially natural condition.

Solitude:

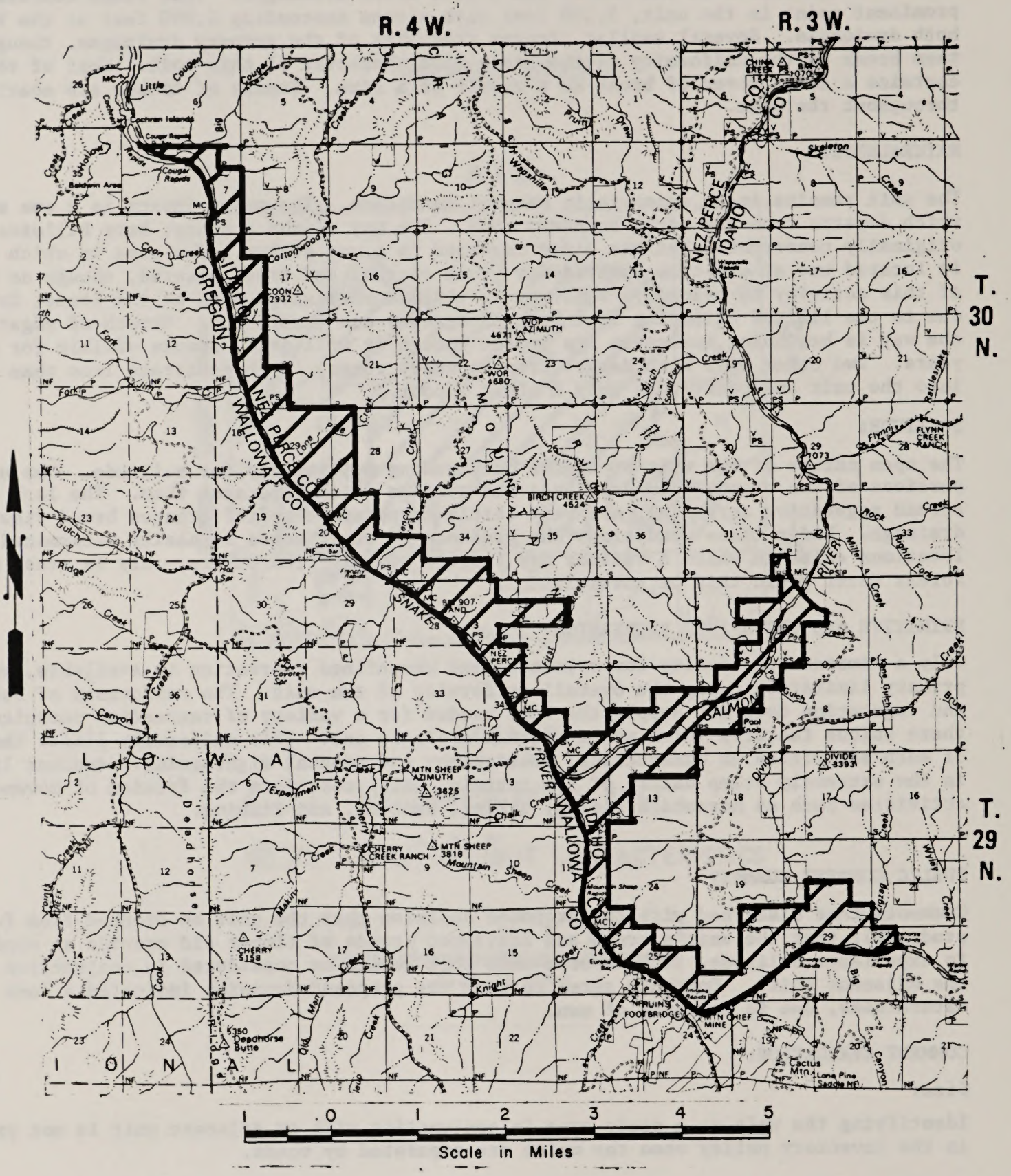
Dense brush and scattered stands of timber do offer an opportunity to experience solitude. However, when this vegetative type is in combination with broad, open valleys, uniform topography, and a small area, this opportunity was not judged to be outstanding. Re-examination of this unit resulted in the same conclusion.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation.

62–2
CONFLUENCE



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

62-2 CONFLUENCE

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 5,110 acres of BLM land. The unit is bounded by an irregular pattern of private land. The Snake River forms the border along the Oregon-Idaho State line. The Forest Service proposed Mountain Sheep Wilderness Area lies across the river from the unit. Due to an oversight, in the initial inventory, a powerline crossing the southern portion of the unit was not inventoried. The same powerline crosses the Salmon River and is the boundary for the Salmon River portion of the unit because of its visual impact. For reasons of consistency, the powerline should also be the boundary of the southern portion of the unit as well, with 533 acres dropping from the unit.

The unit contains the confluence of the Snake and Salmon Rivers. The Snake River borders the unit for approximately 15 miles, while eight miles of the Salmon River pass through the unit. The unit itself consists of the narrow strip of land along the two rivers, with the average width less than 1/2 mile. The portion of the unit along the Snake River consists of steep slopes along the east side of the river. This is an area of highly eroded canyon walls and numerous perennial and intermittent drainages which serve to break up and diversify the terrain. The unit contains both sides of the Salmon River canyon for approximately five miles, then continues along the west side of the river for the remaining three miles. The topography here is the same rugged, steep, and broken slopes as found along the Snake River.

In contrast to the variance of topography is the uniformity of vegetation within the unit. Grasses dominate the landscape wherever soil can be found amidst the predominantly rock terrain. Trees, shrubs, and herbaceous species are generally lacking but can be found along some of the more prominent drainages. With the dropping of the 533 acres, the unit at 4,577 acres, is dependent upon the contiguous Forest Service area to meet the size criteria.

NATURALNESS:

While several imprints of man are present within the unit, the nature of these intrusions and their scattered placement do not create an impact of any significance upon naturalness. A 115KV transmission line passes through the unit and is considered a major visual intrusion. In the area of the confluence of the two rivers, evidence of minor mining activity and a BLM constructed wooden shelter offer a minor impact upon natural integrity. Many sites along the river are used as day or overnight recreation-use sites. Some of the most popular sites present evidence of littering, fire rings, minor soil disturbance, and other low level impacts. Cottonwood Creek contains a picnic table. This level of development does not detract from the natural character of the area to any significant degree. Brightly painted navigational posts are found along the rivers. These are the only reoccurring impacts within the unit, and do offer evidence of man's presence. However, all impacts along the river would only be visible while in the immediate vicinity.

SOLITUDE:

An outstanding opportunity for solitude does exist within this unit, resulting from the extremely broken nature of the terrain. The dendritic pattern of the many drainages has caused a highly eroded rock landscape, which offers innumerable occasions for visitors to seclude themselves from one another. No effective screening is available from vegetation, though with that available from topography, this situation does not significantly detract from the opportunity. The average width of 1/2 mile serves to confine users to a narrow corridor which increases their chances of encountering others. This limitation is offset by the 23 mile length of the unit.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

An outstanding opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation is available in the unit. The steep and rugged nature of the terrain provides a challenging experience, and also serves to restrict other uses with its rugged character. Outstanding opportunities exist for hiking, rock climbing and fishing. The sandy beaches along the river also offer an outstanding opportunity for recreationists. The narrow configuration of the unit serves to confine movement to this seemingly restrictive corridor. However, the steep and rugged nature of the terrain within this corridor creates a feeling of vastness greater than distances indicate. This factor lessens the confinement upon movement.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The area has been identified as an important spawning and rearing site for anadromous fish, and as an important location for the cross-fostering of peregrine falcons. The Salmon River Canyon contains important cultural resources, with evidence of man's periodic occupations of the area prevelant. These sites have been identified as being of National Register quality.

REHABILITATION:

Most of the impacts within this unit could be removed through a minimal amount of hand labor.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that agreed with the proposed decision to identify a study area did not offer any new or specific information.

Comments that disagreed with the proposed decision gave the following specific reasons:

- The unit does not meet the size criteria.
- Outside influences affect naturalness, solitude, and primitive recreation.
- Irregular land patterns exist in the unit.
- Primitive recreation opportunities are lessened by the inaccessible nature of the unit.
- The Forest Service pointed out that the unit was not adjacent to the proposed Mountain Sheep Wilderness Area.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Size:

The Forest Service information pointed out an incorrect assumption which has changed the status of this unit. Since this unit is not adjacent to the proposed Mountain Sheep Wilderness Area (the boundary is actually 1/4 mile back from the Snake River), the unit no longer meets the size requirement.

Solitude-Recreation:

Outside influences away from the narrow canyon would be considered in the study phase, and not in the inventory phase.

While the unit is narrow and serves to confine users to this corridor, the length of the unit at least partially offsets this limitation. The extreme rugged and steep nature of the terrain provides a psychological feeling of vastness greater than actual acreage figures, or dimensions, would indicate.

The rugged and difficult terrain would lessen the desirability of many recreation activities in this unit. However, at the same time it provides a challenging background for other activities. An outstanding opportunity need only exist for one activity.

* * *

DECISION:

Based on new information received during public comment, a change in the decision was warranted. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area as it does not meet the size criteria.

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 1,100 acres of BLM land in four separate parcels, all contiguous to the Forest Service RARE II area 1-853, which has been recommended for further planning. The figure shown for this unit in the August 1979 report, 1,260 acres, was in error.

Through field investigation, it was found that a road originating on private property enters and passes through one of the BLM parcels, ending at the Snake River near Getta Creek. This road should be the northern boundary of the parcel, formally 300 acres, now trimmed to 210 acres. All four parcels border on the Forest Service RARE II area on one side; in one instance only a 1/8 mile common boundary exists. The parcels contain portions of Highrange Creek, Highrange Ridge, Jones Creek, the headwaters of Getta Creek, Poe Creek, and a portion of Camp Howard Ridge. Vegetation consists of open grassland, a variety of shrubs, mixed coniferous and herbaceous species, and a variety of broadleaf trees.

NATURALNESS:

Two of the parcels appear to be in an essentially natural state, remaining unaffected by human activity. The other two parcels have been subjected to varying degrees of timber harvest in 1961 and 1962, with evidence of this activity still apparent. Roads were constructed within the area to facilitate harvest. These now receive insignificant use and no maintenance. Though these roads have reverted to way status, they are still prominent on the landscape. Other evidence of timber harvest including skid trails, stumps, and slash piles preclude a natural appearance. This evidence of man's occupation is visible from all but a few portions of the two parcels.

SOLITUDE:

An outstanding opportunity for solitude is precluded by the size of the parcels, and their configuration. Within these small and extremely narrow areas it would be difficult to find secluded spots. The lack of adequate vegetative screening in portions of the parcels serves to further limit this opportunity. Consideration of this land in conjunction with the adjacent Forest Service land does little to improve the opportunities. These parcels would form projections away from the main area, with none of the limitations significantly altered.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The size and configuration of the parcels would limit freedom of movement. However, the most restrictive factor upon recreation opportunity is the extremely steep, and rocky nature of the terrain. Rock climbing may be the only activity suited to the majority of the area. The addition of these parcels to the bordering Forest Service area would not alter the restrictive nature of the terrain. The addition of this unit provides for a narrow projection that remains essentially inaccessible to most users. This action would not increase the limited recreation opportunity available within the unit.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that indicated the unit did qualify for further study included the following specific reasons:

- The terrain within the unit offers outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation.
- Supplemental values exist in the unit.
- The unit has proximity to the Snake River.

Comments opposed to study area identification indicated a lack of naturalness due to imprints of man.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

The proposed decision indicated that two of the four parcels were in an essentially natural state; the other two affected by man's activity, primarily timber harvesting activities. Public comment did not offer specific data to change this conclusion.

Solitude-Recreation:

This area's opportunities are not limited by terrain, but by configuration. While this unit is technically adjacent to a RARE II area, that border is a very narrow width. For practical purposes, the unit must stand on its own. The addition of the Forest Service land does not alter the extremely narrow configuration.

Movement from the RARE II area into the unit would lead only into a narrow corridor where opportunity to contact other users would greatly increase. Due to the physical confinement inherent in the unit's configuration, opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would not be outstanding. Outstanding opportunities may exist in the adjacent RARE II area but upon entering this unit these opportunities are severely limited.

Supplemental Values:

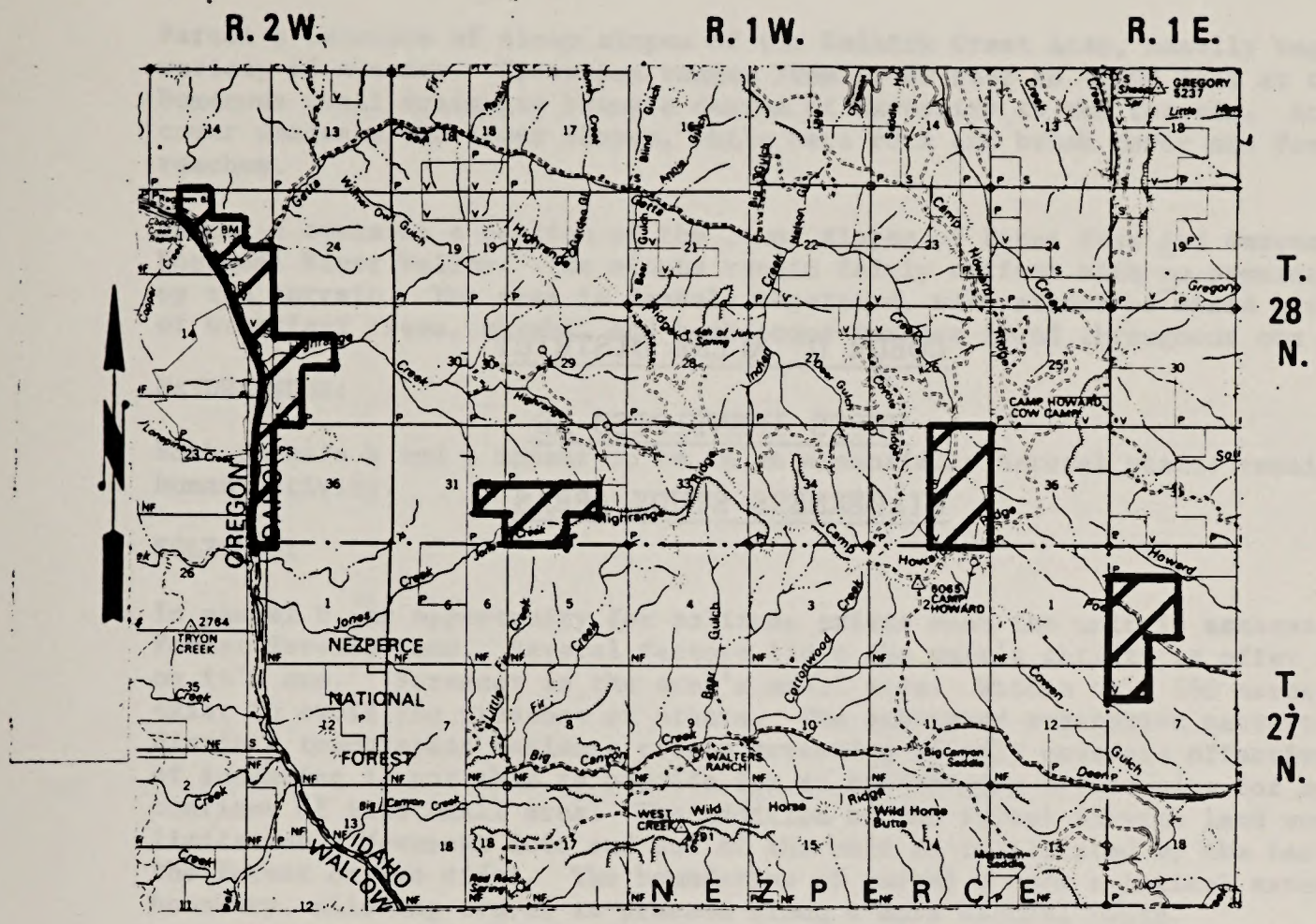
The presence of supplemental values, if other characteristics are lacking, does not qualify the unit as a study area. Proximity to the Snake River would be a study phase consideration, not a part of the inventory process.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. The unit is not identified as a wilderness study area due to a lack of naturalness in two of the parcels, and a lack of outstanding opportunities for solitude and for primitive recreation in all four parcels.

62–4
BIG CANYON



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

COEUR D' ALENE DISTRICT

UNITS IDENTIFIED AS

WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS

61-1 b, c, d SELKIRK CREST

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 1,160 acres of BLM land in three separate parcels. The two northern parcels, b, 560 acres, and c, 160 acres, are contiguous to Forest Service RARE II area 1-125 that has been recommended for further study. The southernmost parcel, d, containing 440 acres is no longer contiguous to the RARE II area, and thus is dropped from BLM consideration due to its small size.

Parcel b consists of steep slopes of the Selkirk Crest Area, heavily vegetated with a wide variety of species. Elevation ranges from 1,800 feet to 4,500 feet at the forest boundary. Numerous small drainages bring a degree of diversity to the terrain. Areas of heavy forest cover dominate the lower slopes, while bare rock and brush cover are found on the upper reaches.

Parcel c contains a portion of the lower slopes of Eneas Peak and descends steeply to the Kootenai River Valley. The slopes remain fairly uniform with no prominent features to break up the terrain. The area is densely vegetated, with stands of mixed conifers, and a variety of broadleaf trees, shrubs, and herbaceous species found throughout the parcel.

NATURALNESS:

Both parcels b and c appear to be in an essentially natural state; remaining unaffected by human activity.

SOLITUDE:

In parcel b, an opportunity for solitude exists when the unit is assessed with adjacent Forest Service land. Several factors limit the unit's ability to offer these opportunities on it's own. Foremost is the area's small size. Within only 560 acres, few occasions exist to avoid the presence of others. The scattered vegetation pattern and the lack of distinct topographic variance create screening of only moderate effectiveness. This degree of screening is not able to provide for an outstanding opportunity for solitude within the confines of this small area. The addition of the Forest Service land would remove this limitation. Movement into and out of the unit is facilitated by the fact that it adjoins the forest on two sides. The boundaries of parcel b form a logical extension of the forest boundary, allowing travel to proceed along a more natural route.

In parcel c an outstanding opportunity for solitude exists only when assessed with the adjoining Forest Service land. Dense vegetative cover within the unit provides sufficient screening to avoid the sights and sounds of others. However, the only effective screening offered by topography is derived from a prominent ridge that runs through the unit. The addition of the Forest Service land would remove the limitation of the unit's small size. Movement into and out of the unit is facilitated by the fact that it adjoins the forest on two sides, with these boundaries the unit forms a more logical extension of the forest boundary.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

In both parcels outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are not available. The uniformity of topography and vegetation and the lack of characteristic features which provide a focal point for recreation activity preclude outstanding opportunities. The restriction upon movement that the parcels' size place upon the user would be alleviated with the inclusion of the Forest Service land. Movement would be available in several directions out of the area. However, recreation opportunities would remain limited, and would not improve in a significant way within the combined area.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The general area in which both parcels lie has been identified as important winter range for deer.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments were received that agreed with the proposed decision to identify the unit as a wilderness study area, with no new specific data provided.

Comments that disagreed cited the following reasons:

- A lack of naturalness in the unit.
- A lack of an outstanding opportunity for solitude and primitive recreation in the unit.
- Influences outside the unit detract from the experience of solitude.
- The unit does not meet the size criteria.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Size:

When considered with the contiguous RARE II area the unit meets the BLM size criteria.

Naturalness:

Comments stated that naturalness was generally lacking, with no evidence supplied to substantiate this opinion.

Solitude and Primitive Recreation:

The comment claimed these characteristics were lacking but supplied no explanation as to why they held this opinion.

Influences outside the unit which are not immediately adjacent to the unit are not to be a determinant in the inventory phase.

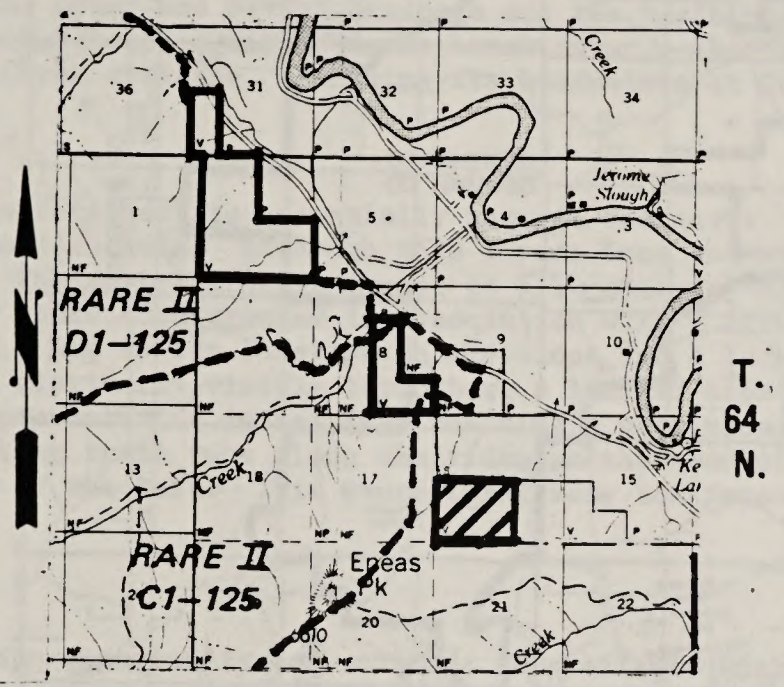
* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 720 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness criteria, and when considered with the contiguous RARE II area meets the size and the solitude criteria.

61–1
SELKIRK CREST

R. 1 W.



LEGEND

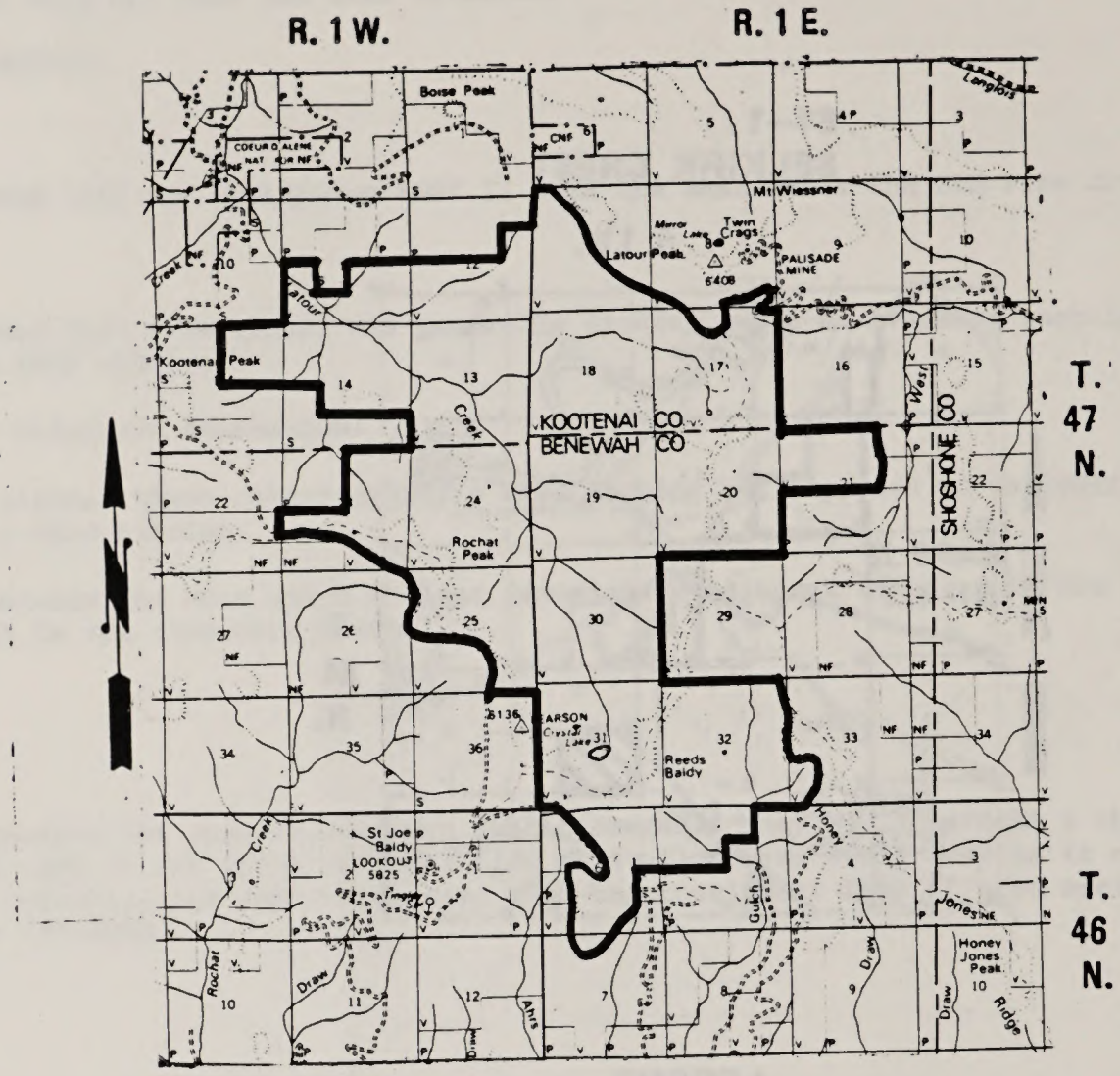
WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3

Scale in Miles

61–10
CRYSTAL LAKE



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

61-10 CRYSTAL LAKE

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The unit contains 9,027 acres of BLM land. The initial inventory identified 8,955 acres within the unit. Field investigation indicated that an identified road more accurately fits the definition of a way. This route, originally constructed as a fire road, has been abandoned, no longer receives maintenance, and its use is only sporadic. This reclassification results in the addition of 160 acres. A 160 acre parcel of BLM land was overlooked and not included in the initial inventory figures, further increasing the acreage of the unit. Additional changes result from a more careful calculation of acreage. The unit contains a varied landscape. Bare talus peaks descend sharply to Latour Creek, some 3,000 feet below Reeds Baldy, the tallest of several peaks. The slopes in the upper end of the drainages are vegetated with a thin to moderately stocked mixed coniferous stand. Toward the lower end of the unit the density of this stand steadily increases. Bare areas of talus material are common in the upper end of the drainage and the basin below Crystal Lake contains the site of a fire now vegetated with a dense brush cover. The unit contains the major portion of the Latour Creek drainage, including its headwaters at Crystal Lake.

NATURALNESS:

The unit has retained its essentially natural character. Evidence of man's activity is found in two locations, although this impact does not significantly alter the natural character. The most intrusive impact is a 1½ mile way along the steep slope below Crystal Lake. This route, constructed in association with a fire, receives insignificant use and no maintenance. Due to its location on the slope and a lack of screening on the brush covered hill, it is distinctly visible throughout a limited area in the central portion of the unit. Topography prevents its impact from reaching a more widespread area. Approximately six miles of hiking trail runs along the ridge at the head of the Latour drainage, and along three sides of the unit. This route is of very low impact and extremely localized in its influence.

SOLITUDE:

An outstanding opportunity for solitude is available within the unit. The majority of the unit is composed of a single drainage. In an area such as this with screening offered by the extensive forest cover, many occasions to avoid the sights and sounds of others are provided. Topography provides a more limited degree of screening due to its relatively uniform nature. The screening that topography provides in combination with that from vegetation creates an outstanding opportunity for solitude.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The diversity of the terrain provides an outstanding opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation. The range from bare peaks to heavily forested creek bottoms provides a broad base for a variety of activities: hiking, hunting, sightseeing, and fishing. The steep nature of the terrain provides a vastness greater than the acreage figures indicate. This steepness provides a challenge for certain activities, at the same time imposing limits upon others.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The scenic quality of this unit qualifies as a supplemental value. Some of the best and most wide ranging views of the surrounding area can be experienced from this unit, ranging from deep valleys and river bottoms to distant peaks.

REHABILITATION:

Natural processes will eventually reduce the imprint of the one way which intrudes into the unit. The addition of hand labor would decrease the amount of time required for rehabilitation.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments that supported the decision to identify a study area felt that more adjacent land should be added to provide some sort of buffer.

Comments disagreeing with the proposed decision cited the following reasons:

- Influences outside the unit detract from solitude.
- A road goes to the top of Reed's Baldy and affects the unit.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

Field examination found that the way to Reed's Baldy does not meet the inventory definition of a road.

Solitude-Recreation:

Influences outside the unit are not directly adjacent, and therefore do not disqualify the unit during the inventory phase.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 9,027 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness, and the solitude-recreation criteria.

61-15 a, b, GRANDMOTHER MOUNTAIN

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

The Grandmother Mountain area consists of a total of 17,129 acres of BLM land, physically broken into two sub-units a and b, where administrative land patterns cause cornering of BLM land, rather than one contiguous parcel. The eastern unit (a) contains 10,339 acres, the western unit (b), 6,790 acres. Unit b contains 160 acres of National Forest land (included in the above acreage), and a 160 acre private land inholding (not included in the above acreage). The August 1979 initial inventory report indicated 10,360 acres in unit a and 6,830 in unit b. The new figures are a result of a more accurate calculation of acreage. Much of the following evaluation refers to the entire area, with specific references to the two separate units.

Units a and b are separated by the Marble Creek drainage. Unit a contains a long ridgeline and several high country lakes. There are numerous creeks in the area, and the country is heavily forested. Unit a is a fairly solid block of ownership. Unit b is much more scattered in ownership. The contiguous 6,790 acres branch out into many fingers, and the National Forest adjoins much of the area. The country is mountainous and heavily forested, with many streams breaking up the terrain.

There are several hiking trails that cross the area, all maintained by the FS or the BLM. These trails cross a variety of country through dense forests, across mountain tops, and along streams. The western portion contains heavily stocked mixed conifers, while the upper elevations contain thin stands of sub-alpine fir and talus slopes. The Orphan Point Road that forms the southern boundary is a good quality route that is generally traveled during three seasons. The area is completely snowed-in during winter months. Major landmarks include the headwaters of Lund Creek, Fish Lake, Grandmother and Grandfather Mountains, Lookout Mountain, and Freezeout Creek. Much of the area overlooks Marble Creek which is essentially administered by the Forest Service, and divides the area into units a and b.

NATURALNESS:

The area has retained an essentially natural character. Evidence of man's activity is found in several locations though this impact has not significantly altered the natural character. Evidence of timber harvests outside the area are visible from within in several locations. This is primarily due to the number of mountain tops that afford panoramic vistas. These external impacts were not judged to impair the naturalness inside the area.

There was a 2,560 acre timber sale in the eastern portion of unit a in 1954. The harvest was a selective cut, with most of the logging conducted on top of snow, resulting in little surface disturbance. Skid trails are now overgrown with heavy brush. Due to the snow depth at the time of the sale, there are stumps in the area 4-5 feet in height. Public comment from the initial inventory indicated that the area contained stumps averaging 15-20 feet in height. However, the field inventory found no stumps over 6 feet on BLM land. It was determined that the area within the 26 year old timber sale generally appeared to be affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable, because the area was selectively cut, with no concentrated area of impact; skid trails are heavily overgrown; stumps are rotting and often lower than the surrounding vegetation; it would require a trained observer to detect most of the evidence of the timber sale.

There are 18 miles of hiking trails in the area. The trails are maintained and have signs at various intersections. However, the impact on the naturalness is very low and extremely localized in its influence. There is a dismantled Forest Service fire lookout atop Lookout Mountain. The remants include wire cables, with a low impact on naturalness very localized in its influence.

SOLITUDE:

An outstanding opportunity for solitude exists within the area. The terrain is mountainous, steep, and frequently broken by drainages. Within this type of country there is an almost unlimited opportunity for visitors to isolate themselves from others. The vegetation enhances these opportunities for solitude. Dense forests cover much of the area, providing an excellent screening effect and separating people from the sights and sounds of others.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The diversity of terrain creates an outstanding opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation. Mountain ridges, valleys, and streams combine to provide the base for a variety of recreation activities. Most activities are related to backcountry camping, including backpacking, hiking, sightseeing, hunting, and fishing. There are also excellent opportunities for nature and wildlife observation.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The scenic values of the area qualify as supplemental values. Numerous mountain tops and ridge trails provide outstanding views of the surrounding country. The Lund Creek drainage in the eastern portion of the area has been recommended for designation as a Research Natural Area due to its great diversity of vegetation. Old growth mountain hemlock and sub-alpine fir forests are the major attractions, but equally impressive are aquatic situations including lakes, sphagnum bogs, wet meadows, marshes, and streams.

REHABILITATION:

Although the impacts of the dismantled tower on Lookout Mountain are minor, the mountain top could be returned to a totally natural condition by removal of the remaining cables. This could be accomplished with the use of hand tools.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

The majority of the comments received addressed units 61-15a and 61-15b as one. Comments that agreed that the units should be identified as wilderness study areas did not offer new data.

Comments disagreeing with the proposed decision cited the following reasons:

- Activities of man outside the unit affect naturalness, solitude, and primitive recreation.
- The shape of the unit is not manageable as wilderness.
- Past logging activities detract from the natural character.
- Ways into Fish Lake and Lost Lake meet the definition of roads.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Roadless/Naturalness:

Comments discussed the impacts on naturalness of past logging activity. The majority of this activity took place 25 years ago. Evidence of past logging can be found within the unit. However, 25 years of vegetation has rendered this evidence substantially unnoticeable. One commentor supplied aerial photos of old logging roads within the Lund Creek area. With snow on the ground and viewing them from aircraft, these routes are visible. During field investigation they proved to be very difficult to find or follow on the ground. From this point of view they were substantially unnoticeable.

The comments on the Fish Lake and Lost Lake vehicle routes were field checked. It is felt that they do not meet the Bureau definition of roads. Both of these routes were at one time constructed but neither receive any mechanical maintenance. Judging by the amount of brush encroaching upon the routes, they do not appear to receive relatively regular and continuous use.

Solitude-Recreation:

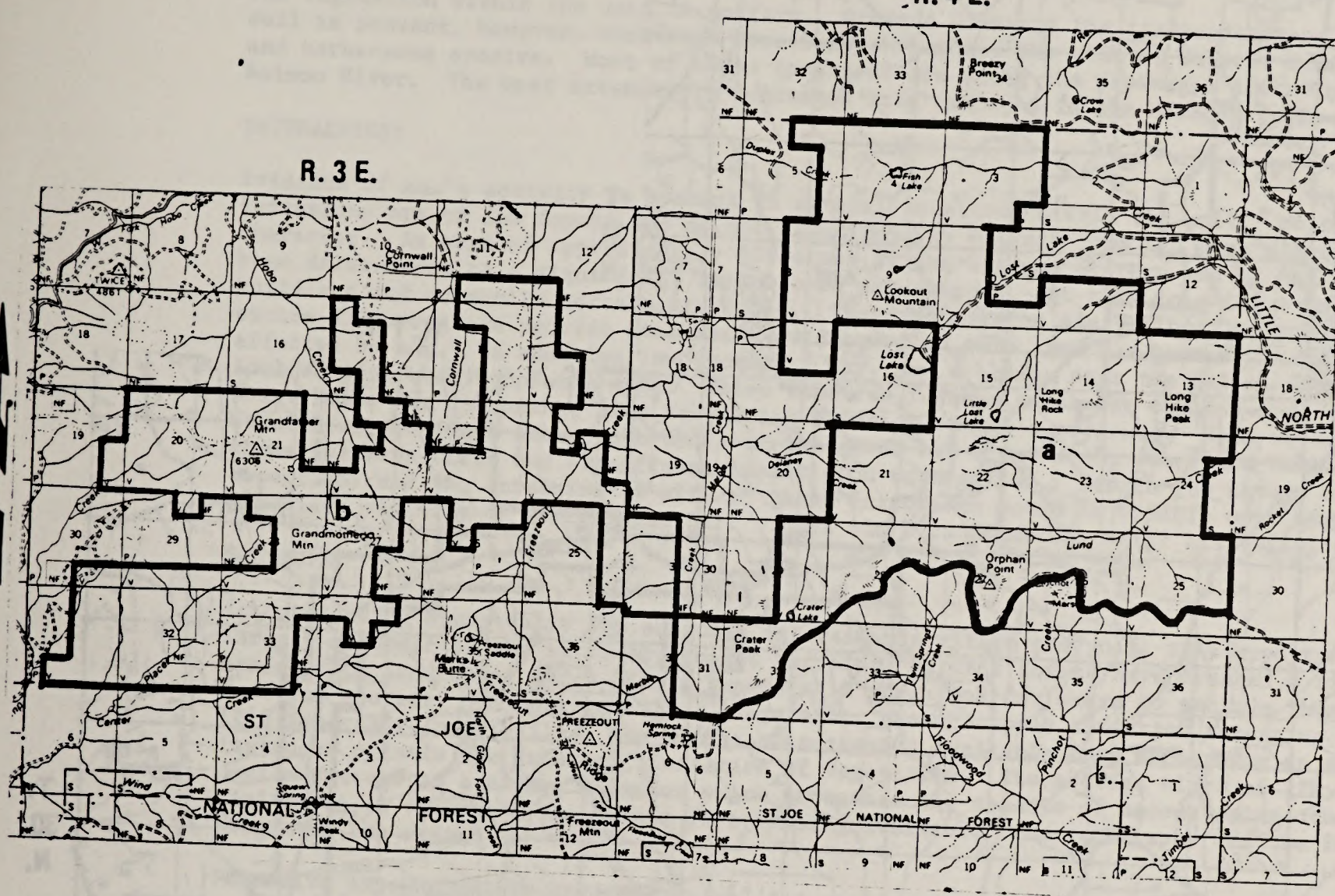
Outside influences, unless extremely imposing and immediately adjacent to the unit, and manageability of the unit, are considered during the study phase and not the inventory phase.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. Units of 10,339 acres (unit a), and 6,790 acres (unit b) are identified as wilderness study areas as they both meet the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

61–15 a, b
GRANDMOTHER MOUNTAIN



LEGEND

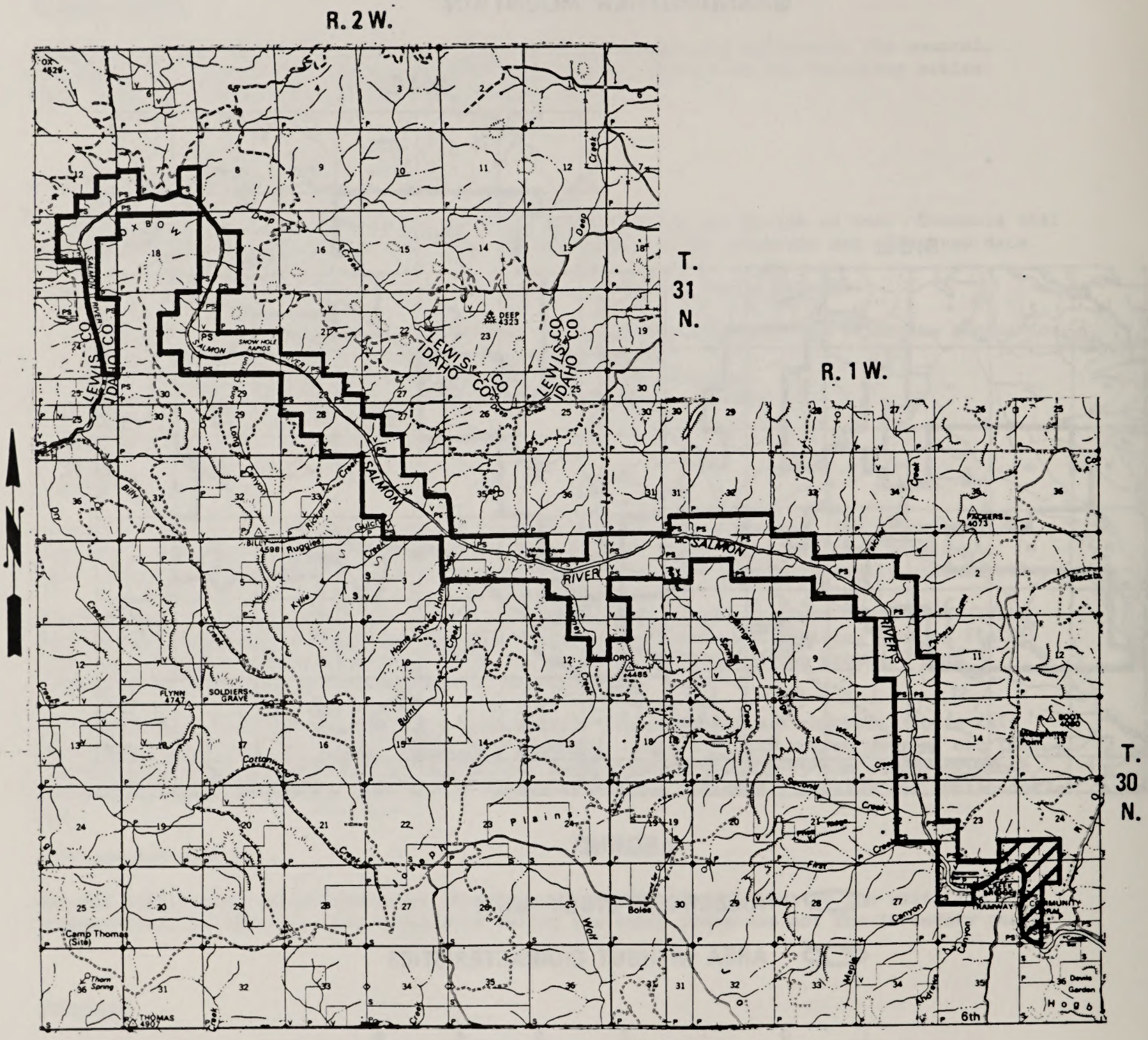
WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

62–1
SNOWHOLE RAPIDS



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS

1 0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale in Miles

62-1 SNOWHOLE RAPIDS

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Private land forms the border around the majority of the unit. The unit is approximately 20 miles in length but averages only 1/2 mile in width. Within this configuration is the Salmon River and its steep canyon walls. The majority of the unit is confined to these walls. Only at Mahoney Creek, approximately midway through the area, does the unit extend any appreciable distance from the river. The canyon walls within the unit are steep and highly broken in their appearance by erosional forces. Numerous perennial and intermittent drainages exist which further serve to break up and diversify the terrain.

The vegetation within the unit is uniform. Grasses dominate the landscape where adequate soil is present, however, scattered locations throughout the unit do support trees, shrubs and herbaceous species. Most of these locations are along the drainages that flow into the Salmon River. The most extensively vegetated area is found in the Mahoney Creek drainage.

NATURALNESS:

Evidence of man's activity is present in several locations within the unit. Most of these intrusions are of low impact and do not significantly detract from the area's natural character. An area of approximately 238 acres at the extreme eastern end of the unit has been deleted due to a significant impact upon naturalness. At this location a group of buildings and community corrals are found. These structures are visible throughout the entire 238 acres and provide conclusive evidence that this area has been substantially affected by man. In addition, two roads, a way, and a bridge over the Salmon River are located just outside of the unit. These features further emphasize the man-made intrusions. White House Bar is another site containing evidence of man's presence. Here several old structures are found along both sides of the river and a way along the south bank. None of these features offer any significant impact upon naturalness. Due to the nature of the topography and the screening it offers, these intrusions would be visible only within the immediate vicinity of White House Bar. These old structures may be of historical value.

SOLITUDE:

An outstanding opportunity for solitude is available within the unit, this opportunity is largely a result of the extremely broken terrain. Natural forces have created a highly eroded rock landscape, which offers innumerable occasions for users to seclude themselves from one another. In most locations, vegetation cannot supply effective screening due to it's generally low profile. The amount of screening available from topography in most instances offsets the inherent limitation of vegetation. The average width of 1/2 mile confines users to a narrow corridor which increases the chances of encountering others. This limitation is offset by the amount of screening available from topography and the 20 mile length of the unit.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The outstanding opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation that is present within the unit revolves around use of the river. An outstanding opportunity is available for river floating in a natural and remote setting. Numerous sand beaches offer excellent campsites for both day and overnight use. Opportunities also exist for fishing, hiking, and rock climbing. The steep and rugged nature of the terrain provides for a challenging experience. This terrain can also restrict other uses with its rugged character. Within the canyon walls, outstanding opportunities exist only for those activities which would benefit from this challenge. The narrow configuration of the unit serves to confine movement to this seemingly restrictive corridor. However, the steep and rugged nature of the terrain within this corridor creates a feeling of vastness greater than distances indicate. This factor lessens the perception of confinement upon movement.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

The area that the unit encompasses has been identified as an important spawning and rearing site for anadromous fish, and an important location for the cross-fostering of peregrine falcons. The Salmon River Canyon has been identified as containing important cultural resources. Evidence of man's periodic occupations of the area is prevelant, with sites having been identified as National Register quality.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments were received that agreed with the proposed decision to identify a study area, but no new supporting data was provided.

Comments that disagreed with the proposed decision offered the following points:

- Outside influences affect the naturalness, solitude, and primitive recreation.
- Irregular land pattern affects the unit.
- Primitive recreation opportunities are lessened by the inaccessible nature of the unit.
- Livestock grazing places the unit in an unnatural state.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Naturalness:

Field examinations did not result in finding any livestock support activities or structures that would detract from the unit's natural state.

Solitude-Recreation:

Comments cited outside influences (such as roads, power boats on the river, and airplanes), affecting wilderness characteristics. Impacts which lie outside of the narrow canyon would be a study phase consideration, and not considered during the inventory. Intermittent use of jetboats on the river is not considered contrary to wilderness values.

Comments stated that the opportunity for solitude was interrupted by the narrow configuration of the unit. While the area is narrow and serves to confine users to this corridor, the length of the unit at least partially offsets this limitation. The extreme rugged and steep nature of the terrain provides a pyschological feeling of vastness greater than actual acreage figures, or dimensions, would indicate. The manageability of this unit in relation to its configuration will be considered during the study phase.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 5,068 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

62-10 MARSHALL MOUNTAIN

The April 1980 proposed decision included the following evaluation of wilderness characteristics.

SIZE AND PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

This unit was called Gospel Hump in the August, 1979 report. The unit contains 7,490 acres of BLM land. Most of the unit is bordered by the Payette National Forest on the north and east. There are several patented mining claims adjacent to the area. The north boundary of the unit is adjacent to the proposed River of No Return Wilderness (now before Congress). The topography of the area is very mountainous, frequently broken by perennial and intermittent streams. The land is heavily forested, broken by occasional talus slopes. These natural features combine to create spectacular scenic qualities.

NATURALNESS:

The Marshall Mountain Mining District, of which the unit is part, was not included in the National Forest boundary because of the pressure from mineral interests to leave the area open to mining. There has been extensive prospecting in the area, much of it occurring 30-50 years ago. However, most prospecting has involved small test holes or other activities that left very little impact on naturalness. The use of minimum impact prospecting techniques and the effects of time have combined to erase significant impacts of naturalness over most of the area. In addition, the heavy forest cover has screened impacts that might be seen from a distance. The unit has retained a strong natural character in all but a few areas.

Three locations in the unit have had major impacts on naturalness and are deleted from the unit. One contains 14 acres and is deleted due to recently expanded mining activities on Bear Creek. Another area of 781 acres is deleted because the cumulative impacts of mining activities were judged to significantly impact the area's naturalness. The impacts include three mining camps, mine-associated machinery, tailing piles, and two access routes cut into the mountain that obviously are the result of man's activities in the area. Neither access route meets the road definition, but they are impacts on naturalness that would not be overlooked. Almost half of the deleted area overlooks the Kimberly, Golden Anchor, and Sherman Howe mines. While these mines lie outside the unit, they significantly impact naturalness when viewed from within the area. A third area of 171 acres is deleted in the southeastern corner of the unit because of the cumulative impact of mining activities on the area's naturalness. Mining impacts include the Tuttle mining operations, several mine shafts, tailing piles, buildings, and abandoned roads. There is a substantial imprint of man's work in the deleted area.

SOLITUDE:

An outstanding opportunity for solitude is available within the unit. This opportunity is largely the result of the mountainous terrain and dense vegetative cover. The broken landscape offers many opportunities for visitors to isolate themselves from others. Dense forests that cover much of the area effectively screen visitors from each other. There are a few places that offer only limited opportunities for solitude, mainly along barren ridge tops in the southern portion of the unit.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION:

The outstanding opportunity for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation is centered around the unit's suitability for backcountry camping activities. Recreation opportunities include hiking, backpacking, hunting and wildlife observation, scenic photography, and sightseeing for botanical and geological features. The diversity of significant recreation opportunities is considered outstanding. There is significant physical challenge associated with cross-country travel in the area due to its mountainous nature. The few trails that exist provide many camping sites which could separate visitors from each other.

SUPPLEMENTAL VALUES:

When considered along with the adjacent proposed wilderness area, the unit offers truly spectacular scenic opportunities. Outstanding panoramic views were observed during the inventory. There may be historical values associated with the mining activity in the Marshall Mountain area.

* * *

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY:

Comments were received that agreed with the proposed decision, but offered no new supporting data.

Comments that disagreed with the proposed decision cited the following reasons:

- The unit is not natural in appearance.
- Square Mountain road goes through the unit.
- The unit is too large to be wilderness.

COMMENT EVALUATION:

Size:

While a unit may be too small to receive study area designation, nothing in the guidelines sets maximum acreages.

Roadless/Naturalness:

Comments stated that widespread mining activity within the unit detracted from naturalness. Areas of concentrated mining have been deleted from the study area. Re-examination of the unit did not reveal any unnatural areas within the unit's current boundaries.

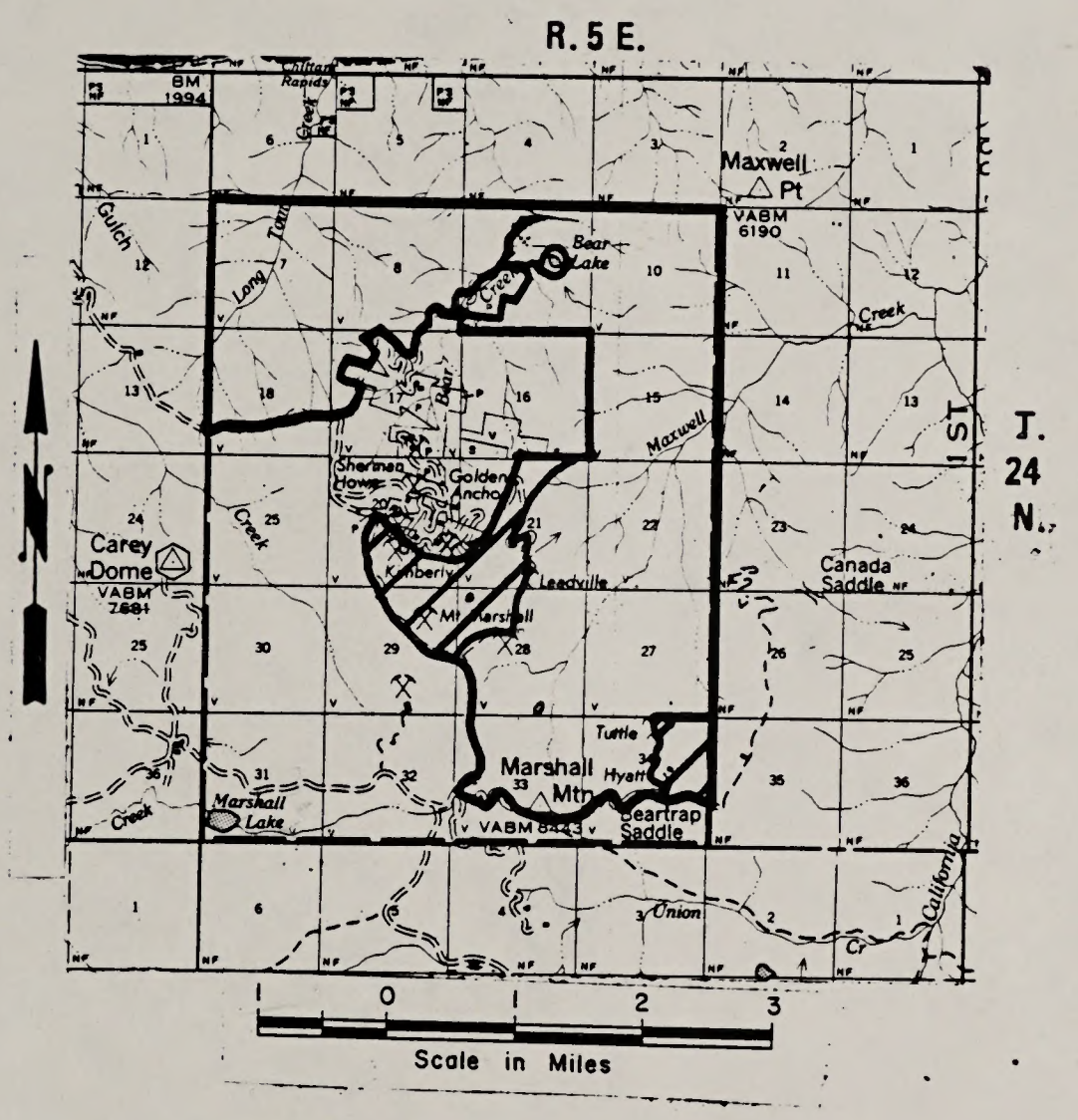
Comments did not identify the location of the Square Mountain road, and no Square Mountain is shown on any map. All roads which meet the road definition have been defined and either lie outside or form the border of the unit.

* * *

DECISION:

No new information was received through public comments that would warrant a change in the decision. A unit of 6,524 acres is identified as a wilderness study area as it meets the naturalness and the solitude-recreation criteria.

62–10
MARSHALL MOUNTAIN



LEGEND

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

AREA WITHOUT CHARACTERISTICS



Bureau of Land Management
Library
Bldg. 50, Denver Federal Center
Denver, CO 80225

QH
76.5
.I2
L36
c.2

Borrower's

Idaho intensive w
final decision

Date Loaned	Borrower